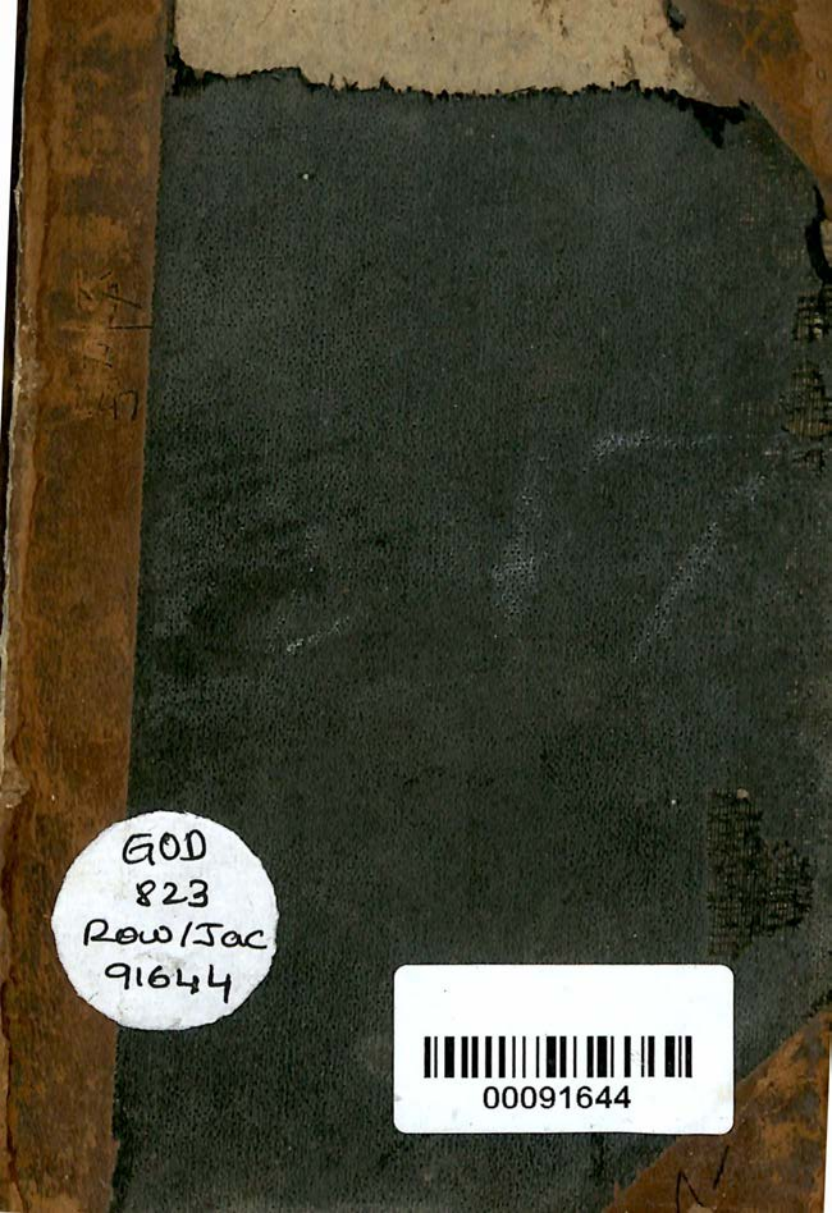
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BY

RICHARD ROWE

AUTHOR OF

'EPISODES IN AN OBSCURE LIFE' 'TOILING AND MOILING'

ETC.

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LONDON

SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE

1875

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PREFACE.

VERY FEW WORDS are needed. At different times I have been thrown a good deal into the company of Sailors, and, on the whole, I like them.

The average Jack seems to me to be neither the injured innocent his thick-and-thin advocates make out, nor an unredeemed scamp as others represent him,

Nothing extenuating, and setting down naught in malice, I have tried in this little book to state what I know of his life, circumstances, and wishes.

R. R.

November, 1875.

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JACK AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

CHAPTER I.

PERILS AND ADVENTURES ON THE DEEP.

I LIKE to talk

With marineres
Who come from a far countree,

especially if they are ancient mariners. The atmosphere of tobacco-smoke in which they encase themselves as with a garment, is not offensive to my nose, and it is piquant to hear an argument clinched with a clenched, brown, tattooed, tar-stained fist, descending on the table like a fallen block that has had some of its blue paint rubbed off.

I think I cannot begin my book on sailors better than by jotting down a few of the stories—true yarns—I have heard from such narrators. The

title given to this chapter is that of a book which was very popular amongst boys in my youngster days—a good book, with, if I remember rightly, a good deal of good writing in it. Jack, as a rule, however, does not go in for the graces of composition, but his narratives probably will be none the less acceptable because reported just as they fell from his lips.

I.

'Rees is my name, sir. I'm a Welshman, from Aberdowey, Merionethshire. I didn't go to sea till I was seventeen or eighteen. I'd been farmering before. I was never apprenticed. I thought a sailor's was a fine life, you see. Shouldn't if I was a boy again, and knew what I know now; no, no! At first I sailed out of Bristol, mostly coasting trade; carried coal, and iron, and grain, and such. Then I went foreign. Three times I've been wrecked. First time was in 1831, in the brigantine "Meredith," of Bristol, Captain William Frederick. She'd gone to Labrador to load fish back. It was on the 13th of November; about nine at night we found ourselves

close to the breakers at Cape Luff, with the sails blowing away. We got into the boat with two pint bottles of rum, and two pint bottles of water. That's all we had—no food. We were twenty-four hours in the boat, and then we landed at Dead Island Harbour. Then we went south; we put in at Square Island and stayed there three days. Seven days' fog. At last we got on to Francis Harbour, but we couldn't get home. The "Meredith" was the last vessel on the coast. One of the poor chaps died, starved and frost-bitten. I had to stay summer as well as winter. They were short of hands for the fishing, and wouldn't let me go. No one'll take you, if you haven't a discharge to clear you from your last master. I didn't get home for eight years. Went on to St. John and Halifax, and sailed out o' them.

'Next time was 800 miles west of Scilly, in the "Elizabeth," of Exmouth; she was a brig, timber-loaded. Yes, and water-logged; nine or ten days we were at the pumps. We got every now and then a bit of bread or cheese or raw ham, and the ham burnt us up with thirst. We'd to take to the maintop at last, and there we were seven days and seven nights without eating anything. We'd got

nine or ten pounds of bread up with us, but couldn't eat it because we'd got no water. Every day but one we sighted sails, and they saw us, but wouldn't come nigh us. There was an American liner had to brace up her yards to run clear of us. At last a brig from Odessa to Dundee took us off. Called at Falmouth for orders, but weren't let to land because she was in quarantine; we'd to go on to the Thames and do our quarantine at Sheerness. Last time was in Holyhead Bay, five years after the "Royal Charter" was lost; timber ship again, the "Confiance," of Liverpool, drifted to leeward and struck, and there we were, from nine o'clock one morning till five o'clock the next, and then if it had been daylight we could have got ashore in our own boat, though there were two lifeboats handy. There was a row about it.'

II.

'Norris is my name, sir, and Hull is my native place. I've commanded a 1,200 ton ship in my time. I was apprenticed at fourteen, or perhaps it was fifteen, and now I'm sixty-four. In the East

India trade I've been chiefly, but when I was a boy I was wrecked in the ship "Flora," coming from Cronstadt to London, with deals. She was run on what we call the weather shore, you understand, not a lee shore; of course it was mismanagement. There were lights on two islands near the one we struck on. However, it was the back end of the year, as we say, hard winter coming on. The ice was hanging about in blocks, and it soon froze together, and so we got ashore. The Finlanders treated us very kindly, though twasn't much but fish they'd got to give us. When the ice was fairly formed, we got word sent to our vice-consul at Cronstadt, and he sent sledges for us, and same way he saved a good bit of the rigging of the ship and so on.

'The second time I was wrecked was about forty miles to the north of Bombay, in a little 200 ton brig, the "Jane Young," bound out from London with a general cargo. We were partially dismasted—the foretopmast had gone and carried away the head of the foremast—when she struck on a reef. But there's a great rise of tide about there, from nineteen to twenty feet, and it fairly lifted her

over into smooth water, but the bottom was knocked out of her.

'And I've been burnt at sea, leastways the ship I sailed in was. She was loaded with cotton, and it had been pressed damp. We were for London from Bombay, and had twenty passengers on board, women and children amongst them, and about twice as many in the crew, all told. I was second mate then, and had gone down into the gunroom to get some provisions, when I smelt a peculiar smell. I looked into the hold through the hole in the bulkhead, and saw a glow. The cotton was on fire. Fortunately it was dead calm, and there was no panic. Everyone was quite cool, women and all. The boats were got out, and we got into them, launch, two cutters, gig, and jollyboat; the provisions were put into the launch, and all the boats met night and morning to have them served out. I was sent back with the butcher in the gig to kill the cow, and the sheep, and the pigs, they made such a horrid row, poor critturs, as the fire gained on the ship. We were six or seven days in the boats. It was I that sighted the Mauritius. I'd been sent away with four men in the gig to see if

I could make out land, and I saw the mountain and knew it at once. It was distinct enough up above, though it didn't seem to have anything to rest on. So we made the island, and there we dispersed. The passengers and some of the hands went home, and some shipped in outward-bound craft. I got home.'

III.

'And we'd a fire, homeward bound from Balaclava. I was out there all the war; it was the barque "Kate," of Shields, with government stores for Woolwich. We'd stopped at Constantinople for a week, and three days after, at three o'clock in the morning, a man came running out of the forecastle and said it was full of fire. The captain had just made out the passage when the man came on deck; all hands were called to take the sail off the ship, and get her before the wind, and the boats out, but the tackles were coiled on the water casks under the forehatch. The bulkhead was on fire. We were glad enough to get the hatch on again. The captain ran her ashore, for the flames were

coming up through the fore hatchway. We got off in the boats, the captain in the gig, and I steered the longboat. I was cook then, though I've been mate and master since. We saw H.M.S. "James Watt," ninety guns, steaming up, and hoisted the ensign union downwards on a pole, and a boat came with the first lieutenant, and he told us to pitch in our clothes but nothing else; but we got some sugar and coffee, and cocoa, and three sheep, and two pigs, and we were all on board the man-of-war by six A.M. She'd had to land her lower deck guns to carry troops. Ah! I remember wars afore that. I went to sea in 1803, when I was twelve years old, and I'm eighty-four now; fifty-five I was at sea. I hail from Sunderland, in Durham, sir. First I went in colliers, and then in transports. Thousands of soldiers I've helped to carry to Portugal, when the Duke was only Sir Arthur. Three years I was in men-o'-war, "Serapis," "Buffalo," and "Malabar." I was paid off in 1815, at Deptford. I was wounded in the leg here in the American war. No, sir, we didn't take the Yankee; he took us, and carried us safe to New York; 75,000*l.* we were valued at, ship and cargo. Forty

years I was mate, and two and a half master. Eighty-four I am, and fifty-five o' them spent at sea.'

IV.

'Not M'Carthy—M'Arthur, that's my name. I was born at Grangemouth; but I went to Port Glasgow when I was six months old. Of course I was carried! I was apprenticed to the sea when I was fifteen, in the North American trade. Australia! round and round it I have been—Melbourne, Torres Straits, Singapore, Shanghai. When I was in the "Waverley" of Glasgow, we'd ever so many Chinese soldiers on board, and two mandarins, going to fight the rebels. The Chinamen pretty near mutinied, for there was a lot of treasure the mandarins had with them. We'd mud ballast, and it turned to mortar, and we capsized 250 miles N.E. of the island of Formosa; cut away mizenmast, mainmast, foremast, one after the other; but she wouldn't right. We were four days on the wreck. A Bremen ship lay by us for a bit, but her sails were blown away, and the cap-

tain sang out that he hadn't water enough for us all; but a little schooner carried us to Foo-Choco, the "Nora," a British-owned coaster trading there.

'And now I can tell you something. In 1871 I was aboard a ship that was on fire all the way from India to the docks—the "Colombo"—laden with cotton, jute, and linseed. That was a fire that was caused by water; the cargo was wet. She was an iron ship, and felt so hot we were sure something was wrong. A gale caught her, and over she went on her beam ends. She'd only the foresail hoisted. We'd just taken off the maintopsail, the foretopmast staysail, and the trysail, or the masts would have gone. Next day, when the weather had moderated, we opened the fore hatch for ten minutes at a time, and dug into the cargo as far aft as we could, towards the main hatch. There were no flames; but the cargo was burning. We got as much of the burning stuff out as we could, and battened down to keep the air out, but when we got near Ascension she began to cut her capers again. There was a kind of jury on her there, and the government folk clean swept her,

and choked every hole, and we volunteered to take her home. But when we got into the Channel she was at her old tricks; she was altogether out of trim. She was all of a smoke in the docks, and I heard afterwards, from some chaps I met at the Sailors' Home, that tons of the cargo were good for nothing, and that she'd gone back to Calcutta in ballast.

'Yes, I've been in ships that were dismasted, and you can see for yourself that my figure-head's damaged. It was a block that smashed my nose. When I was master of a Glasgow brig, in '47, I'd a collision with a Riga barque in 45 N. 45 W.; cut right into her. Her anchor hooked my bobstay, and we very near went down with her. As it was, we carried away bowsprit and masts. We were going about ten knots, with ice on the starboard bow. She sank in nine minutes. Saved all hands, except the captain. The chain-cable blocked the hatch, and the watch below had to tumble aboard us in their shirts through the hole we'd made in her. The night was as black as pitch.'

'Ah, if my plan was carried out,' put in another old salt, 'neither she nor the "Northfleet,"

nor any ship with a hole in her, need have gone down. I'd always have a stuffed double tarpaulin stretched on iron rods. Pitch it overboard, and it would be sucked into the hole, and stick to it like a plaister till you could get a sail or something down. Don't you think it's feasible, sir? No, I've nothing particular to tell you about myself. In '40 I was capsized when I was mate of the "London Packet," bound to Aberdeen; but we took to the boats, and got her into Blyth. Once I was capsized in a boat in trying to save the crew of a Dutchman—only we didn't.'

'Yes, I've been in steamers' went on No. IV. 'I was pretty near wrecked in a Liverpool one—the "Quito" they called her—that went to Chili and Peru, in the Straits of Magellan, owing to the variation of the compass; they didn't understand that then so well as they do now. Whaling I've been, sperming and Greenland, and I've been in the slave trade: Chinese slave trade. Well, what are coolies but slaves? Ours mutinied twice. Put a hundred of them in irons. All died: 150 died altogether. Got to Callao just two days before the bombardment. Going back we struck on a reef not down in the

charts, near the Philippine Islands, but there were 300 empty water casks, well bunged, in the hold, and they floated her.'

V.

'Where I've been and what I've seen? Well, then you'd better wake me early some Monday morning, and stick by me till the clock strikes twelve on Saturday night, and then, maybe, I could *begin* to tell you a little bit. Yes, sir, I am a Norfolk man—Great Yarmouth; Joseph Crisp is my name. I went to sea when I was about as high as the table. No, I never tried the fishing. Colliers, coasters, foreign-going ships, I've been in. Baltic and Mediterranean, Black Sea, East and West Indies. The sloop "Resolution" that traded to Hamburg, was the first that I went in. Things were harder then. No small stores, no fire allowed, no oilskin clothes; we'd be wet for a week together. A mate's wages were 2*l.* 15*s.* to 3*l.* a month, and now a man before the mast can get his 4*l.* 10*s.* But men were well-made then; there were better sailors then than there are now. No, the ships were

well found; no stinting; good food and plenty of it. You can't well have weevilly biscuit in the coasting trade; the voyages are so short. We'd corned beef, pudding with molasses, butter, cheese, vegetables, and such like. And no one ever laid a hand upon me, man or boy.'

[*Comment by a Bystander*: 'Things were hard enough in *my* time. First voyage I went—it was from Liverpool—the mate chased me up the rigging, welting me because I was sea-sick, and I'd that very man's place afterwards, and showed I was just as clever a chap as him.']

'On December 21, 1833, I was shipwrecked on the south coast of Norway, in the brig "Crown," of Yarmouth, from Petersburg to London, with hemp and tallow. Set of the current and hazy weather; blowing and snowing; pitch dark, except for the snow. We were in among the rocks before we saw them. We stayed three months in Norway. The British consul found us clothes and lodging, and then he sent us home in two of his vessels.

'In '52 I was master and part owner of a Liverpool schooner, bound to Galatz. We run ashore on the coast of Roumania. It's a very

bleak, wild coast. We took to the boat and pulled for nine days and nine nights up an unfrequented branch of the Danube. The people on the shore gave us a little boiled fish and black bread now and then. When we got to Tultcha, that's about two-thirds of the way to Galatz, we found there was an English consul there, and he relieved us and put us aboard vessels coming down to Constantinople. I had to abandon another vessel I was master of—the "Zoe." We'd loaded iron ore in the Bay of Biscay for Antwerp, and it rumbled about and strained her. When we got into the chops of the Channel, somewhere near Scilly, she was making a deal o' water. There were five of us in crew, and night and day we were pumping. Sometimes, as long as we could keep a fire alight in the cabin, we got a drop of coffee. We were almost done, when one afternoon, just such weather as this, with the wind blowing strong from the east, as it's cutting over the marshes now, we sighted a Norwegian, the "Maria," and hoisted the ensign union downwards. She bore down on us, and lay by all night; it was a wretched night; never stopped pumping a minute, and the sea breaking over her

like a rock. Next morning she sent a boat and took us off. We were settling down fast by the stern. Under she went two hours after we left her. The Norwegian put me aboard an Antwerp pilot boat at Dover, and when I got to Antwerp I reported loss to consignees, and wrote home to my owners.

'Ay, I've been in a collision—between Flamborough Head and the Humber, bound to the Isle of Wight with coals. We were just dragging through the water at two-and-a-half knots, and down she came on us at nine or ten—a Scotch steamer, full steam, and going before the wind with topsail and squaresail up. Just abaft the paddle-box I hit him; lucky 'twasn't his paddle-box. Didn't see him till I was right on him; no time to put the helm up or down. Don't know what damage I did him; but he'd to pay 350*l.* for the damage he'd done me. They didn't carry the three lights then, and we'd only a bull's-eye light for the deck, like a policeman's. I left the sea, sir, because I'd put every penny o' mine in a ship that was lost, and she wasn't insured. Yes, sir, it *was* hard; all my earnings. I've never been a man since, and now my poor wife's gone, and I'm

moving on pretty quick; but I'd do what I could for them that's to come after me.'

VI.

'Don't you remember me, sir? My name is Oakman, Peter Oakman, of Montrose. When I was at Memel there were two vessels wrecked there, a Scotch schooner and a Prooshian. Me and my mates wanted to man the lifeboat; but the Prooshians wouldn't let us; they were jealous. They had to let us, though. They went out in her for the Prooshian; but they were afraid to go alongside. Then we went; but the mast came out of her before we could get near, and she broke up fast. So did the schooner; but we picked up one of her men lashed to a skylight. The glass had cut right through the flesh to the bone. Ever so many corpses were washed ashore. Another time I was wrecked in a new Indiaman, on the sands off Great Yarmouth. We tried to launch a quarter-boat; but the tackle-falls got into kinks, and one o' them parted, and she capsized. We'd only got an

old collier's longboat to trust to then; leaked like a sieve; but she landed us, three-parts full o' water she was, at Great Yarmouth. I must have told you about that before, sir—about our going to Yarmouth workhouse; fifty shipwrecked sailors in all, and there we were for eleven days. The first day they gave us a round of bread and treacle each, and afterwards potatoes, and now and then a bit of meat, and a bucket of small beer amongst the lot. They wanted us to take 2*s.* apiece, and tramp back to Sunderland up to our knees in snow. At Fécamp I was wrecked in the schooner "Caledonia." We got safe ashore; but the chaps on land said they'd claim our clothes, because we'd deserted our vessel, so I swam back to the schooner. She was heeled right over. I swam till I was worn out, and was washed ashore insensible. Another time, at Hartlepool, me and some mates got into a coble to go out to a schooner in distress; but the fishermen, though they wouldn't go before, pitched us overboard and went themselves, and saved the crew. But I'm sure I must have told you all this before, and I haven't been to sea since. Tom, sir—oh! old Tom Smith, you mean—a very

old man that was with me the last time I saw you. Dead, sir, two years ago.'

[Turning back to an old note-book I find that the story given me by old Tom, almost stone-deaf, but still nearly as upright as a ramrod, ran as follows :]

VII.

'I was ten year old when I went to sea—"Jane," o' Sunderland. I was pressed twice, but got off. A French privateer got hold o' me ; they called it "L'Etoile," and I'd three days and three nights in Calais prison, and three years in Arras, and five at the back o' that at Besançon. Black bread, made o' rye and tares, and half a pound o' meat, was our rations. No grog, only rain-water, and no baccy. Beds? Straw served out once a quarter to cover the bricks, and half a blanket apiece. We'd to use all our jackets to cover the holes in the bricks. No work, only to keep the place clean. There were men of all nations there, Rooshians, Spaniards, and Maltese. Then I was in Lyons, in a nunnery, and then I was

sent to Morlaix and came home in a transport. In Exeter I'd a pair o' shoes given me, the first I'd had on for years. I was so used to the wooden clogs—sabots they called them—I scarce knew how to wear the English shoes. I was wrecked in Angelholm Bay, and was nineteen hours in the foretop, till a fishing boat took me off. And I was dragged out of the Lincolnshire main by a farming man, and then I made a dash in and grabbed one of my mates; he sends me postage stamps for baccy. And I've saved lives in the Sunderland lifeboat. I was lamed at sea, that's why I left it. Then I did odd jobs in a shipyard, looking after the pitch-kettle and such like, and then I'd to come on the parish, eighteenpence a week; but a gentleman that was a kind friend o' mine says, "Is that Tom Smith? Give him sixpence a week more."'

CHAPTER II.

HOW WRECKS ARE CAUSED.

THE wreck chart of the British Isles is the dreariest of maps. Red and black dots, fit emblems of loss of life and mourning, are scattered all over it, but they form an almost continuous fringe along its coast lines from the Moray Frith to Dungeness, and so on to the Scilly Isles, and thence up to the Firth of Clyde, and from Clonkilty Bay to Malin Head, whilst the seas between Ireland and England are studded with the gloomy signs ; in some places they lie in tiers, like colliers in the Pool.

Who is responsible for—what are the causes of—the lamentable loss of life and property thus indicated ?

Frankly—it is no proof of friendship to flatter

them—sailors themselves are largely responsible. The manager of the Liverpool Sailors' Home says, 'From all I hear from newspaper reports, from trials, but much more from the sailors themselves, I am convinced that many, I might almost say most, of the accidents to ships, loss of life, loss of property, and serious damage, come through intoxicants at sea. I feel very strongly on this point, and conclude that many lives would be spared, many ships saved but for the use of strong drink amongst the officers as well as seamen.'

In this respect a Liverpool vessel runs more risk than one sailing from any of the London docks. The crews of both may have been hunted out of brothels and bundled on board drunk, but the London ship gives her crew at least a chance of sleeping off their drink by bringing up at Gravesend, whereas the Liverpool ship has at once to breast the stormy Irish sea dashing in upon the dangerous Welsh coast. I will give a by no means extreme instance. A ship left Liverpool for Calcutta, in tow of a tug and in charge of lumpers. The crew were put on board as she passed the dock gates, all more or less drunk. The master was as bad as

his men; the mate was the only sober member of the ship's company. The lumpers having set the topsails, double-reefed, cleared the deck, and made everything as snug as they could, left the ship when she had got fairly out to sea, and returned to Liverpool in the tug with the pilot. The wind veering and freshening, the mate turned all hands up to close-reef the topsails. They managed to do so, but owing to bad steering, the ship made a good deal more leeway than headway, drifted back, indeed, towards the Mersey.

Alarmed by the lights he saw on shore, the mate went down into the cabin, and tried to rouse the captain.

'Let me alone,' the captain growled. 'It's no use; we'll all be in hell in a couple of hours.'

The crew were partially sober by this time, and obeyed orders. There were breakers ahead—the mate wore ship, clewed up the sails, let go both anchors, and paid out both cables. To give the ship a chance of holding on, he then cut away the masts. A tug bore down upon her, hawsers were passed on board, the cables were slipped, and she was towed back to Liverpool a wreck, the captain

coming on deck for the first time as she repassed the dock gates, stem inwards.

'That crying sin of our Scandinavian nations,' writes Captain Henry Toynbee, himself an ex-master mariner, '*drunkenness*, prevails largely amongst captains of ships, as we may see by the returns of the Board of Trade of the causes of wrecks, and is no doubt caused, in many cases, by the reaction and loss of energy consequent on rising to the command of a ship.'

One of the best friends Jack ever had, the Rev. R. B. Boyer, of Bristol, or rather the Bristol Channel, declares that 'all the winds that blow upon the sea, all the rotten ships that were ever floated upon its waters, have not been so destructive to the seaman as his mad love for drink.'

It is utterly unjust to saddle, as some sensational speakers and writers do, shipowners with almost the entire responsibility for casualties at sea.

That a drunken crew will, in all probability, send their craft ashore or to the bottom, is a proposition which a landsman can enunciate without presumption. He may also venture to express an unqualified opinion that if men whose seaman-

ship consists in ability to 'wheel a barrow,' who have, perhaps, never been to sea before, are shipped as A.B.'s; if other men, eaten up with disease, ship themselves as such; or if the vessel be numerically undermanned, the chances are that the craft they man will come to grief. But there are technical questions in connection with seaworthiness on which it becomes a landsman to speak with diffidence, if he would not blunder as ludicrously as the fresh-water officer, who, in putting a ship about *memoriter*, got on very well until he came to the 'Let go and haul!' for which, in mid-ocean, he substituted 'Let go—the anchor!'

It is the more difficult for a landsman to treat these subjects, inasmuch as experts differ so widely upon them. They must be treated, however, by anyone who professes to write of sailors at all, and it is a great pity that legislation upon them has been allowed to hang over for another year. Whatever opinion may be entertained of poor Mr. Plimsoll's outbreak in Parliament, and certainly his warmest friend can say nothing of any weight in defence of his behaviour to Mr. Bates, the failure of the 'Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment Bill'

must be very generally regretted, not least by the honest shipowner.

Before entering on technical matters, however, let us consider the question of insurance, since this is asserted to be responsible for many a wreck.

It is idle, of course, to maintain that ships are *daily* lost or wilfully wrecked through their having been insured for more than or up to their full value. In that case the business of marine insurance would very speedily be extinguished, instead of being keenly competed for; but it is a noteworthy fact that a very large proportion of ships insured for total loss are lost. As the law of marine insurance stands at present it offers temptations to carelessness and fraud; instead of being merely indemnified against loss, a shipowner may make a profit by the wreck of his vessel; if owner of the cargo as well as the ship, he can insure the freight, and 10 per cent. profit on the freight. She is lost, so insured for a round voyage, shortly after leaving port. In that case he can recover the value of his ship, and of the freight, and 10 per cent. profit out and home, whilst from the day his ship came to grief his crew have no claim for wages against him, and

he escapes in addition the cost of their keep and port charges. Under these circumstances, it is not wonderful he prefers a total to a partial loss. As no one but a monomaniac would be likely to maintain that anything like *all* the total losses are the result of reckless ruthless greed, the proportion which they bear to the partial—one to twenty—shows that shipowners are not the bread-out-of-bone-making ogres they have been represented. Still the law ought to be altered to make the owner more largely answerable to the men and to their families for the damage he has inflicted on a crew shipped in an unseaworthy vessel.

Leaving the great question of overloading for consideration further on, let us examine a few other asserted causes of wrecks. Undermanning, as has been mentioned, is one of these—undermanning in the sense of both numbers and efficiency. Some of the remarks of the report of the Royal Commission on this head do not seem very forcible. It is said that, owing to the lack of British seamen, it is necessary to ship Swedes, Norwegians, and Lascars in British ships. But there are no better sailors afloat than the Scandinavians. Though they get the

same wages as British sailors, British owners and masters often prefer them. At the School of Art, Mr. Rochussen took up the cudgels on behalf of foreign sailors. He pointed out that, if they were not employed, the British mercantile marine could either not be manned or else must be diminished, in which case a good deal of foreign trade would pass into foreign hands. He remarked further that 'the Englishman was not already a sailor, with that innate love of the sea, which sounded so well in song and romance.' In this Mr. Rochussen must certainly be wrong, as may be seen—to draw proofs from very opposite stages of society—from the number of our yacht clubs, and the longing almost universally manifested for a sailor's life by our street boys, hundreds of whom have never seen the sea. To return to the report, if Lascars are not British seamen, they are British subjects, and they are often employed under circumstances in which British-born men would not be as efficient. The P. and O. Company were compelled, it is said, to employ them to the extent they do by a kind of strike amongst their British hands. Again, the modern British sailor is accused of want of 'thrift,'

'sobriety,' and 'self-control'—surely these are no new faults of Jack's. As to 'thrift,' though there is still much room for improvement there, he is reported to look after his money infinitely more sharply than in the days in which he fried gold watches, and lighted his pipe with bank-notes. There is far more force in the statement that the rating of A.B. is often given to utterly incompetent men. To remedy this, it has been suggested that an O.S. should not be rated A.B. until he has passed before the officers of the ship in which he is serving, receiving either a first or second class certificate, according to the number of his 'goods,' 'fairs,' and 'passables,' on an examination in the following Royal Naval Reserve 'subjects:'—

1. Furling sails.

2. Reefing sails.

3. Steering with the wheel. Can box the compass.

4. Taking the lead; can swing it; can mark the lead line.

5. Can knot and splice, and make all necessary hitches and bends. Pass a stopper on a cable or a fall; can strop a block; can turn in a dead-eye; can

rack a lanyard; can use a parbuckle; can rattle down; can make chafing mats.

6. Sending up and down topgallant yards and royal yards.

7. Reeving running rigging, fore and aft.

8. Stowing fore and aft sails in a stiff breeze.

9. Working anchors and cables.

10. Use of palm and needle; can work a cringle.

11. Can pull a good strong oar.

It is thought that ordinary seamen would be likely to present themselves for this examination without the inducement of necessarily immediate higher pay, from the consideration that they would get the preference in case of a vacancy for A.B. in their own ships, and that they would be earlier entitled to join the R.N.R. It is probable, however, that if the higher pay kept step with the higher rating, the inducement would be more potent. The fourth subject in the above list is an especially important one. When I was going out to Australia, we brought up off Margate, where we lost an anchor and a good bit of a cable. As we ran down Channel afterwards, a man was stationed in the

chains to heave the lead. When he began to haul in the line, an unsophisticated young man from the country exclaimed delightedly, 'Hurrah! Charlie's got it! Charlie's got it!' He was under the impression that Charlie had been angling for our missing anchor. Ignorance of the lead to this theoretical extent is, perhaps, rare in the British mercantile marine, but there are some scores of British merchant sailors who could no more heave it than that young man could have done. It is asserted that the reason why the lead is so seldom used on board British vessels is because there are so few on board them who know how to use it. Besides men, mates and masters may be ineffective, and on this head Mrs. Janet Taylor, who knows all three classes well, makes some very unpleasant revelations. 'To become second mate,' she says, 'it is only necessary that the candidate be able to write decently, shuffle through the first simple rules of arithmetic, and work a day's work.' Having served as second mate for a year, he comes to school again, to go in for his first mate's certificate, and it is absolutely necessary to cram him, since, having received no intellectual training, he has

nothing but his memory to trust to, and the same process is repeated when he wants to pass for master. Though a man must pass a very stiff examination to get a British extra-master's certificate, ordinary British masters, who command the majority of British ships, are not required to have nearly as much professional knowledge as a Prussian mate of the first class. Moreover British examinations are said to vary according to the examining Marine Board.

Of course there are as good British A.B.'s now as there ever were, in a seamanship point of view, and many of them are far better in a moral, but most of these men, leaving the Royal Navy out of the question, are employed by yachtsmen, the great steamship companies, and the owners of such vessels as are not long absent from home and come back regularly to the same port. The vast increase of our steam shipping is the great cause of the lack of sailors complained of. 'Steamers,' it has been epigrammatically remarked, 'use sailors, but don't make them.' The number of sailors in the British mercantile marine has increased absolutely but, foreigners included, not in anything like the same

proportion relatively to the increase in tonnage, whilst the number of apprentices and boys has absolutely decreased. Captain Bedford Pim has calculated that the annual waste of British seamen amounts to 16,000, and to supply successors would establish 80 pauper training-ships throughout the United Kingdom, able to turn out on an average 200 boys apiece.

The gallant and learned member prepared and brought into Parliament last session a Bill empowering justices of counties to combine for providing county training-schools and training-ships. Others suggest the revival of compulsory apprenticeship, and in this suggestion British seamen seem to go with them. Some of the most respectable of British shipowners still take apprentices, and make officers of them, if they have been well conducted, when they have served their time; but others, no doubt equally respectable, do not care to have the bother of boys, or say that if they happen to get useful boys, they are almost sure to run before they have served out their time, whilst on the other hand it is difficult to get rid of a boy not worth his salt. The third course suggested is

to combine training-ships and apprenticeship as feeders of our merchant navy; every ship above 100 tons not carrying apprentices being required to pay sixpence a ton per annum towards the support of training-ships, in which boys would be indentured to the commanders for five years, to be transferred after a year or two's instruction to serve out their time in any ship willing to receive them. Hitherto, as will be seen farther on, apprentices from training-ships have generally deserted in order to obtain O.S. pay.

'Cracking on'—the anxiety which skippers feel to gain personal fame and please their owners by making short passages—is, I fear, another cause of wrecks. Any Englishman who has taken a voyage must remember the thrill of delight he felt when his craft outsailed a rival—especially if it chanced to be a Yankee clipper, the pang of disappointment and mortification he felt when 'our ship' was overhauled by any other, British or foreign. There is as keen racing on the blue waves as on the green turf, and sea-racing, like land-racing, has a monetary as well as a sporting stimulus. The fastest sailer brings the first tea, and so on; the

liner that gets famed for short runs has her berths always full; and a few days more or less upon a voyage make a very considerable difference in a large ship's earnings, in the way of coals, provisions, &c. If the steamers plying between Liverpool and America would only lengthen their course by a day or two, they would, it is said, almost eliminate the ice-risks they at present run.

Ships' lights again are often defective—the side lights of many vessels are almost worthless. Instead of 'throwing a clear, uniform, and unbroken light over ten points of the compass,' they furnish such illumination as might be expected to find its way through a number of strips of glass lined with bands of metal. Again, the charts which a merchant skipper consults are often antiquated, misleading instead of guiding, a merchant ship's compasses are often mal-adjusted, and she is not adequately supplied with other instruments. The international 'rule of the road' at sea seems plain enough, even to a landsman, to wit, that steamers shall keep out of the way of sailing vessels; slacken speed, if necessary stopping and reversing their engines, when approaching other ships; go at a

moderate speed in a fog; keep out of the way of an overtaken vessel; keep out of the way also, in crossing, of other steamers on the starboard, and port their helms when meeting other vessels end-on; that if two sailing vessels close-hauled meet, the one on the port tack shall keep out of the way of the other; that if one is close-hauled and the other free, the free one shall keep out of the way of the close-hauled; that if both are free, with the wind on the same side, or if one has the wind aft, the windward vessel shall keep out of the way of the leeward; that if the wind is on different sides, the vessel that has the wind on the port side shall keep out of the way of the vessel that has the wind on the starboard side. And yet we know that collisions are lamentably frequent. Although this rule of the road is adopted by all nations, steering directions seem sometimes to be interpreted in diametrically different senses.

According to British law, it is the duty of a master of a ship, when in collision, to stay by the other ship to help her if necessary or practicable, and to give her the name and destination of his own ship, and if in default he is made liable to

criminal punishment. These enactments only apply to foreign ships when within British jurisdiction. Wishing to obtain uniformity of process, the British Government invited the maritime powers of Europe and America to assent to the application by British courts of the same law to their ships when in collision out of British jurisdiction as British ships are subject to, so far as civil proceedings are concerned, each nation being left to act for itself in reference to the infliction of criminal penalties. The application, however, met with but limited success. Many ships are wrecked through running in too close to lighthouses in thick weather in order to make out the light—that which was meant for a saviour thus becoming a destroyer; and a more uniform system of shaping and colouring buoys would diminish the risks which ships run in entering harbours.

And now for the ship herself. Of course she ought to be built of good wood or iron, but it is a great mistake to suppose that an old ship cannot be a strong ship. Some of the strongest merchant ships afloat are old ships, and how often do we read of an old man-of-war, when broken up,

that her timbers were as sound as when first put into her. Of course a ship stands a far better chance if built in water-tight compartments, so that, though part of her may fill, the whole of her will still float, and if she has steam-pumps, her chance of safety is still further increased, whilst they will save labour in other ways than pumping. Double bottoms for water-ballast are not unattended with danger, and seacocks and insufficiently protected stoke-holes are responsible for loss of steamers. Now that iron is used so much in shipbuilding, vessels can be made much longer than when they were built of wood, but it may be doubted whether, in spite of the altered material, their length is not often too great in proportion to their beam. They have to drive through the billows like a ploughshare, instead of bounding over them like a bung ; they get strained, the water rushes in, and down they go like tilted teaspoons. If the 'Atlantic' had been set upright on her stern, her bow would have towered fifty feet above the cross of St. Paul's Cathedral.

As to loading, it seems to be almost universally admitted that deck-loads, at any rate in winter, and

loading grain in bulk should be prohibited. The cost of assurance is diminished one-half when corn is shipped in bags, the cost of the corn is only increased some sixpence a quarter, and then the bags can be sold.

What is the tonnage of a ship? is a preliminary question raised when the load-line has to be discussed. There has been a long controversy on the subject in which it seems to a landsman that many words have darkened knowledge. To an outsider the answer to this question seems to be concisely given in these words:—

'The true tonnage of a vessel is simply the number of tons of dead-weight she is capable of carrying in safety, or her bulk between the light and the load water-lines, i.e. the difference between her light and her load displacements given in tons.' But what a ship can carry safely in smooth water she could not carry safely in rough, and this appears a fatal objection to Mr. Plimsoll's proposal for a permanent load-line. The Government Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment Bill and Mr. Norwood's Load-line Bill agree in providing that the owner shall mark his ship with a load-line; but

empower him to alter it, with due publicity, according to the nature of the voyage on which he is going to send his ship. The Government, in the debate on the makeshift Shipping Bill, stultified itself by at first opposing the owner's load-line, for which it had made provision in the Bill it was obliged or found it convenient to drop, but eventually gave in on this head. It opposed, however, the prohibition of deck cargoes, and made a compromise as to the prohibition of the loading of grain in bulk. If more than one-third of the cargo of a ship consists of grain, such loading is to be prohibited. Mr. Plimsoll, again, would not allow any British ship to leave a British port unclassified by Lloyd's, the Liverpool Registry, or some other surveying body approved by the Board of Trade. Against this system of compulsory survey (Mr. Norwood would leave it optional for an owner to call on the Board of Trade to survey his ship) the report of the Royal Commission urges the following objections:—That it would saddle Government with a responsibility it is incompetent and ought not to bear, and therefore at the same time relieve owners, to a dangerous extent, of responsibility.

Some are for putting owners to the expense of this compulsory survey, but at the same time would not allow it to free them from any responsibility; but really this is rather too much like the negro's 'Talkee and floggee both.' The commissioners hint that perhaps the Board of Trade has already gone too far in examining passenger ships, and point out that though merchant ships are surveyed by government officers in France, Belgium, and Italy, the survey is so superficial that underwriters attach no value to it. There can be no doubt, however, that the powers given to the Board of Trade, in 1873, to detain and survey ships, have been of great practical good. During the first nine months the Board was so empowered, its officers surveyed 286 ships. 256 were found to be unseaworthy—234 from defects in ship or equipments, and 22 from being overladen. From August 5, 1873, to December 31, 1874, 440 vessels were reported to the Board for survey on the allegation of defects in hull, equipments, or machinery: 14 were found seaworthy; 404 unseaworthy; in the case of 22 the survey was still pending at the date of the return; 25 were dis-

mantled or broken up after survey. 34 ships were reported as over or improperly laden. In every instance the surveyors found the charges true, and had the vessels lightened or reloaded.

It may be doubted whether, since the latest Shipping Bill is confessedly temporary, it would not have been well to leave things as they are until a complete measure could be passed, instead of creating a new order of surveyors, who, so long as they continue in the egg at any rate, seem to inspire alarm rather than confidence. The powers which the Board of Trade already possesses, with Mr. Plimsoll, *more suo*, to keep the Board up to its work, might have given Jack quite as efficient protection as he will get under the new arrangement.

Of all maritime disasters a fire on board ship is, I think, the most appalling, and for such calamities, I am afraid, sailors have often only themselves to thank. I like Jack as much as any man can, but I want to tell the truth about him. Amongst sailors, I have foregathered with almost ludicrous approximations to the type of the free-handed, chivalrous, cutlass-to-his-foe-offering, theatrical Jack, but it cannot be denied that a good many

sailors are reckless ruffians, or, if not ruffians, exceedingly loose fish in matters of *meum* and *tuum*. They break into the hold with naked lights, to plunder passengers' boxes and get to the beer casks and spirit bottles. A fire follows, mysteriously originating in the 'boatswain's locker,' or where you will, and the generous British public very likely is called upon to subscribe for the relief and to make heroes of the very men who have caused the calamity.

In cases of fire, ships and lives are often lost simply because those who are willing to do their best to suppress it do not know how to set to work. They have not been trained, and so they get in one another's way, or give in to the general panic.

When a ship is largely freighted with human life, the pity and horror of a fire at sea are brought into ghastly relief; but other ships furnish, probably, a larger proportion of lives so lost. Between July 1, 1873, and June 30, 1874, 32 coal-laden vessels, bound from the United Kingdom to ports abroad, of a total tonnage of 17,435, disappeared, 7 of which are known to have been burnt, and many of the missing remainder probably met with

the same fate. The number of lives lost in these vessels was 330.

In almost all cases of maritime mishap boats must bear a large share of the blame, or rather those who ought to provide or keep in order the boat accommodation. There are not enough boats, or they cannot be launched, or they are launched with the plugs out, and devoid of oars or tholes. There are now life-rafts as well as life-boats, which have been proved to be practical inventions for the saving of life, and every ship carrying large numbers of passengers ought to be provided with one or more of them. In addition, moreover, to the ordinary life-buoy, which is chiefly useful for the rescue of anyone who has fallen overboard, a good many articles of ship furniture might be constructed so as to act as life-preservers. It must be remembered, however, as the sad case of the 'Schiller' showed, that it is possible for a good many people to be provided with life-preservers and yet to lose their lives.

CHAPTER III.

RESCUE.

THE wind is howling, driving before it rain or hail that stings like shot, and spray that drenches to the skin. 'White horses,' with wildly-flowing manes, are galloping along the leaden sea, which breaks in thunder on the rattling shore. Harbours and roads are crowded with craft that have run in for shelter. They are safe, at least comparatively safe; nevertheless they give smart tugs at their anchors as they bob up and down like corks. But look at the shipping labouring in the weltering waste outside the curving harbour walls and the ever-shifting sandbanks; look as well as the dizzying spindrift will allow. It is a dead certainty that all will not be able to weather the storm. What will become of the crews of the castaways?

Let us see—drawing on the most literal fact,

not excited fancy, for our pictures. Vessels in distress are burning blue-lights, coastguard guns are sending back such consolation as recognition gives through the hurly-burly of the gale. Lifeboat men, bent almost double, are striving to hurry to the tumbled strand. But a tug, with her steam up, is lying in the roads. Down the Bristol Channel she splashes in the dark, and, seventeen times ranging up alongside a disabled vessel, as gingerly as wind and water will permit, takes off the crew of seventeen—one after another, as the tug comes alongside, leaping on to her slippery, deluged paddle-box.

A snowy nor'-easter is blowing in upon the Norfolk coast. Towards midnight signals of distress are seen hard by the Corton Fairway Light. A surf lifeboat is launched. Over the wild sea she is sent, with straining oars pulled by straining arms. She finds a schooner wrecked upon the Barber Sand, takes off her crew of five, and lands them in the small hours. But the shore is no sooner reached than another signal of distress at sea is seen. Off goes the lifeboat again, falls in with a tug, which tows her to the lightship. 'On the Holm Sand'

is the news there given. The tug splashes on with the lifeboat in her wake, and at 4 A.M. a Whitby brig is found aground on S.W. Corton Spit. It is a bitterly cold winter morning, there is a heavy cross sea on the Spit, the lifeboat is dashed against the wreck and damaged, but the gallant lads who man the Caister 'Boys' rescue the crew of six, and the tug tows them into Yarmouth.

In the same year, a little farther north—on the Lincolnshire coast—a gale, almost a hurricane, is raging. Five vessels drive ashore as the dull winter morning breaks; a sixth goes down with all hands. Of the five stranded vessels, four are so high up on the sands that the crews can be saved on horseback; but the fifth, a Lynn vessel, is setting towards Sand Hale. If she strikes there, it is all up with her; but she cuts away her masts just in time to enable her to hold on to her anchors. The 'Donna Nook' lifeboat is launched, but the sea dashes her back upon the beach with broken oars. Again her heroic pullers launch her, and for hours wrestle with the storm. Having started at 9 A.M., they reach the wreck at 2 P.M., and after

three failures in a boiling sea, carry off the crew in triumph.

A Prussian ship strikes on a ledge of rocks near Kimeridge. It is a dark, wild winter night, but the Kimeridge lifeboat—one of the tiniest of her kind—is launched. Her crew clench their teeth and try to force her through the sea, but it dashes her ashore. In the morning, however, she gets off, and reaches the wreck just as a rocket whizzes over it from the coastguard station. The lifeboat men lay hold of the line to haul by, and in two trips rescue the Germans.

A Memel brig is in distress off the Sandy Ness, Montrose. The crews of two lifeboats turn out. The larger one is lifted up by the sea until she stands upon her stern. Oars are snapped, four of the crew are washed overboard. 'They've life-belts on, they'll float,' say their mates, and pull on for the brig, which has run aground. Two more oars are broken as the boat drops alongside. 'Jump!' shout the lifeboat men. The captain, the mate, and four of the men do jump, but two other men and a little boy hold back. The lifeboat then proceeds to pick up the men who are floating,

benumbed in the weltering waves. One is insensible from a blow. They are all pulled on board, and taken ashore to the lifeboat house, where a doctor is waiting for them with hot water and blankets. In spite of every care, one of them dies a few days after. The two men and the little boy are saved by the other lifeboat.

Such are samples, taken at random, of the services rendered to the shipwrecked by the noble, nobly-manned craft of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, whose object is to afford assistance to every person wrecked upon the coasts of the United Kingdom. Besides building, stationing, and maintaining in repair, with due appurtenances, lifeboats of the best construction, the institution gives honorary rewards and pecuniary remuneration 'to all persons who, at the risk of their own lives, save, or attempt to save, those of others on board vessels wrecked, or in distress, upon any part of the coasts of,' &c. The average cost of a ten-oared lifeboat, with lifebelts and carriage and house, is 800*l.*; the annual expense 70*l.* Each boat has a coxswain and an assistant coxswain at small fixed salaries, and a registered volunteer crew,

twice as many as the boat pulls oars, if possible. Every time she goes afloat to save life each man on board receives 10*s.* if by day, 20*s.* if at night, and 4*s.* for exercise pulls. Some 20,000 lives have been saved by the Lifeboat Institution. There is another society, the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners', which gives rewards for saving life at sea—on the high seas or the coasts of the colonies. It has more than a thousand honorary agents, and by their means it boards, lodges, clothes and forwards to their homes—or nearest consuls, if foreigners—seamen, soldiers, poor people of all nations cast destitute ashore. It also assists seamen, both of the navy and the mercantile marine, coastguardsmen, fishermen, pilots, boatmen, and apprentices who subscribe 3*s.* a year to the society (it has 48,000 such subscribers) to replace their property lost at sea, and relieves their widows, orphans, and aged parents. It is needless almost to say that the 'turnpike sailors' who tramp about the country begging, under pretence of having been wrecked, are scampish humbugs. Had they really been wrecked—to say nothing of their being sailors—this society would soon have sent

them to the homes or ports they profess to be so anxious to reach. The Shipwrecked Mariners' Society was the mother of the Royal Alfred Aged Merchant Seamen's Institution at Belvedere. The society itself originated in a talk between a Bath doctor and his servant, an old sailor. The servant had been reading to his master a newspaper account of a fearful loss of life owing to the wreck of fishing-boats on the North Devon coasts, and asked the doctor whether there was any fund for the relief of the drowned men's families. The doctor answered that he did not know, but would make enquiries, and these enquiries led to the establishment of the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Society, which, in one way or other, has relieved nearly a quarter of a million of people.

CHAPTER IV.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

THERE is a little crowd of people on the wool-littered, grease-scented wharf. The men on the wool-press cease from their labours as the last bales are swung on board. The skipper and the pilot are chatting on the quarter-deck. Passengers and passengers' friends and creditors are fussing about like ants. The tug is hissing as if it would blow up if compelled to wait much longer. The blue peter flutters from the fore royal masthead. The crew are weighing anchor to a very groggy chant of 'Cheerily, men, heigho!' 'Now then, who's for the shore—shore—the shore?' runs along the deck and is shouted down into the 'tween decks; all not belonging to the ship, except those who intend to go outside the Heads in her, go over the side, the towrope is made fast, and down the harbour the good ship shoots in the wake of her puffing, splashing, sturdy little

leader, which strains at the hawser like a blind man's dog half choking itself with its string. Ships of the same line fly their house-flags and ensigns and cheer the 'Swiftsure' as she glides by. The sea-weary passengers of a vessel just arrived hang over her bulwarks and look very much astonished that the sea-going 'Swiftsures' should cheer back so heartily.

When well clear of the land, the tug casts the ship off. Whaleboats bob alongside like corks, as the accommodation ladder plunges almost half way down into the sea. Good-byes and God-bless-yous are interchanged, to the amusement of Jack, at home everywhere and nowhere, and boat after boat departs laden with drenched valedictory friends, all cheering lustily as they pass under the 'Swiftsure's' stern; three times three they give her when re-united on board the tug. She returns the compliment with interest, and then the topsails fill, and she gives a shake as if impatient to spread all her wings. The tug soon becomes a mere triangle of stars, red, green, and yellow; one lighthouse star flashes out and shines in steady radiance, another waxes, wanes, and then blossoms again out of the

gloaming; the 'Swiftsure' is fairly off. Rain blows in from the sea that reaches to the ice of the South Pole. The saloon passengers retreat to their comparatively snug quarters, the intermediates to their comfortless ones, ventilated with a lanky windsail flapping about like the petticoat of a hanged giantess, lighted with a lamp with a wick like a grog-blossomed nose, and supplied for immediate refection with a sackful of biscuit and a small tank of tea in which tea-leaves float like seaweed after storm. The accommodation of the forecastle is even less comfortable, but, barring a fight caused by the irritability engendered by recent life on shore, the watch below has pretty nearly shaken down into form. The watch on deck is also still rather alcoholic, but it has put on its dreadnoughts, tarpaulins, oilskins, and sea-boots, put up its collars, pulled down its sou'-westers, lighted its pipes, cut its quids, and is taking 'fishermen's walks—two steps and overboard,' upon the sloppy deck. The crew is miscellaneous—English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, American, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Spanish, mulatto, Jewish, and 'cornstalk.' The cook's mate, a dirty old fellow, who wears a brimless hat like an

inverted inkstand, says that he was once the editor of an influential journal. Onward the 'Swiftsure' rushes through a sea of black and white, over which drearily homeless-looking sea-birds, white and grey, dusky and zebra-striped, flit and croak and scream. Sometimes a saloon passenger gets a successful shot at them, and is cursed, *sotto voce*, for his pains by the scowling man at the wheel.

Water knee-deep washes backwards and forwards on the deck, and passengers sprawl and splash in the lee scuppers; now this, now that is carried away. When the jib-sheet goes, the clip-hooks of the blocks are found to be straightened into rods. Soup tureens capsize, potatoes just on the point of being harpooned for peeling roll off like lost balls, 'the dish runs away with the spoon,' crockery and tinware cascade from the tables with a crash and a clatter. The steward bumps down between the galley and the cabin, with feet in the air, and a sauce-boat in one hand and a rice-pudding in the other. The deck leaks; in forecastle and in 'tween decks, here and there in the saloon, too, sleepers are aroused from their slumbers by dirty water trickling down their noses, or drip—drip—dropping

into their open mouths. The ship shudders and shrinks as if she had been stung, and creaks like a crushed basket as billow after billow thumps against her bow like a battering-ram and deluges her deck with a curving shower of spray. The booms break from their lashings and roll about on deck. The cow and the sheep are ousted from their quarters and make a plaintive clamour as they stagger about disconsolate. The monkey takes refuge in the pigstye and pinches its inmates until they squeal like swine possessed. A panic seizes the poultry and the parrots. Tin pots, pannikins, plates and dishes clash all night long like cymbals. Bunk bottoms give way, and upper-tier slumberers descend with a mutually-startling thud on those who sleep beneath.

South, south, south over the seething dark waters flies the ship, as if bound for the Pole; beneath a low mud-coloured sky, which the main-truck seems to scratch, or plunging blindly through a marrow-chilling mist. The sea poops her, smashing the skylights, thundering down the hatchways, and sending chests adrift, sometimes with limp, lugubrious owners floating on them. Canvas flies out of the bolt ropes in smithereens, spars snap, blocks

thump down on the deck like cannon-ball fruit, the wheel wrenches itself out of the hands of the two steersmen, and spins round like a catherine-wheel, the wind-tolled bell gives out funereal knells. Slushy snow lies in deep drifts on the lee side of the decks, cases the spars and rigging with a twelfth-cake covering, and is shaken out of the belly of each flapping sail. Icicles a foot long, bristling like bayonets, hang from the eaves of the deck-houses. The mercury drops to zero. The ropes are stiff as iron rods. Pulley and sheaves are frozen fast together, and hot water has to be poured on the blocks before the rigging will run. Some of the crew have their fingers frost-bitten; all come off their watch with their beards and whiskers frozen silverily bright and hard.

A startled shout of 'Ice ahead!' brings almost everyone on deck from dinner. A bluish-white mass is sullenly swaying beneath the dirty sky upon a leaden sea; in process of time it forges past—a high-cliffed, many-summited floating island, with billows breaking on its slippery sides with a sound like that of distant thunder. Conversation freezes up like the tunes in Baron Munchausen's horn. Save when

an order is shouted through the wild wind, that makes harpstrings of the taut weather-shrouds, the 'Swiftsure' seems to be 'drifting with the dead to shores where all is dumb,' that is, with dead galvanised into sufficient simulation of vitality to keep pipes alight, as they stand or lounge back to back after the manner of bullocks. Only at lingered-over meals do tongues give utterance to articulate speech, and then in tones 'mournful as the voice of subterranean winds.'

But the 'Swiftsure' at last slants north, and officers, crew, and the hardier of the passengers pluck up spirit enough to have a snowballing match. The snow and icicles melt, and passengers who have been in their berths almost ever since the 'Swiftsure' left port make their appearance on the sodden decks in a very corpse-like resurrection. The more pecunious of them, when they venture forward, are pounced upon by the crew, dropping from the rigging like spiders, darting out of dark hiding-places like sharks, and have their boots chalked, as an intimation that they must run up a score with the steward for, at least, a bottle of rum apiece, to pay their footing.

The monkey comes out of the pigstye, and gallops round the ship on a 'porker driven frantic. Exhilarated by her ride, she plumps into a bucketful of fresh-boiled rice in the galley, hastily gobbles up almost as much as she has spilt, and then scampers up the rigging, jabbering like a maniac, and most tenderly touching the portion of her frame which the indignant cook has aspersed with a ladleful of hot gravy.

At last the Horn is sighted—an island frowning in dull purple gloom, with brown clouds hanging about it like chandeliers swathed in holland. At the same time the first sail the 'Swiftsure' has seen since she last saw land is sighted, a barque slipping up the west coast to Valparaiso or Callao.

Up goes the 'Swiftsure' on the other side, through the 'roaring forties.' When she is out of them, in seas that seem quiet after late experiences, on a Sunday afternoon calm enough to enable the crew to enjoy their favourite Sabbath amusement of overhauling their chests, the boatswain's is brought out. He was knocked down by a block, and swept overboard by a shipped sea in the stormy part of the voyage. His scratched,

battered, rope-handled box and its contents are to be sold for the benefit of his widow. Two of the saloon passengers appoint themselves auctioneer and auctioneer's clerk, and make more bad, or at best indifferent, jokes than good, as they puff article after article produced, sometimes with difficulty, things that have suffered a sea change into nothing rich, but something occasionally very strange. There is no weeping over the jolly, plucky boatswain's effects, but in spite of the poor jokes cracked over them, jokes recognised with far richer laughter—a very little wit goes a long way at sea—the men respect the memory of their deceased comrade, and intermediate and chief cabin passengers vie in running the items up to fancy prices. The battered silver whistle fetches more than a brand-new one costs on shore, and is presented with a mock high-flown address to the grinning boatswain's mate. Another sail is sighted —a barque with double topsails, and a something peculiar in her build, which shows that she was once a steamer. The signal-box is lugged out, and the craft indulge in polychromatic conversation, little squares of rainbow hoisted up and down. As

the vessels near, the 'Swiftsure' sends a boat to board the stranger. The boat has been lying on skids, keel uppermost, oarless and tholeless. She is pitched overboard like an empty bottle, bumps against the side, knocks off a good bit of her fore-foot, and is nearly swamped; but at last she pulls away, one hand still baling briskly. Up and down she goes on the great swelling waves, sometimes quite hidden in the trough of the sea. After what seems a weary time she reaches the barque, and officers and men on both sides, who, if they had met on shore, would not most probably have had a word to exchange, or who might, indeed, possibly have come to blows, greet one another, met upon the sea, with the fraternal effusion of Box and Cox. Back comes the boat with a bundle of English papers, eagerly pounced upon, and the intelligence that the barque belongs to a great mail company, and is carrying out supplies and substitutes. Her shrouds are blue and gold with these supernumeraries when the vessels part company with three cheers and thrice-dipped ensigns.

But sails in sight soon become almost as common as sparrows on a London roof—a housetop on

which the bird certainly does not sit solitary. Close by they canter, or glide past dream-like. Glorious weather has set in, true naval blue and gold. Even a calm, if it does not last too long, is not growled at. There is a hush throughout the ship, save for the flapping of the useless sails and the rainlike patter of the reef-points. The watch are setting up the rigging in the most leisurely of styles. 'Sails,' up to the waist in sun-reflecting canvas, that undulates about him like huge ball-room flounces, as lazily plies his flashing needle and his dusky 'palm.' Men passengers, prone or supine beneath awnings, dream over their pipes and cigars. The women folk nod over novels, too lazy to work, to gossip, or to quarrel; even the children have ceased to rush about like rabbits. Amongst both sexes and all ages there is a great demand for effervescing beverages. The blue sea heaves like a slumberer's breast. A whale sends up its crystal fountain jet; porpoises play at leap-frog; shoals of silvery flying-fish scatter diamond dust spray from their glassy wings.

But still pleasanter is it when beneath the blue sky, and over the gold-spangled blue water,

just breaking here and there into running lines of snowy foam, the good ship skims like a white-winged sea-bird. The man who is taking his trick at the wheel is almost the only member of the crew who has anything to do, and it is a very easy task to 'keep her full.' In such weather Sunday really is a day of rest at sea to Jack, as his craft flies home with rainbows painted on the foam that showers on her black bows.

The carpenter's bench is bare. Scotch 'Chips' sits on the sunny step of his deck-house, with half-closed eyes, enjoying simultaneously a pipe and pious meditation. His cabin fellows of the same nationality, to wit, his mate and 'Sails,' are humming a psalm tune instead of the 'Laird of Cockpen.' The butcher has washed his face and put on a stick-up paper collar. The foremast men have put on clean shirts and smart dungaree. The captain and mates are metamorphosed into nautical swells—white trousers, gold-lace bands, gilt anchor buttons. The poultry cluck tranquilly over their fresh maize, the sheep bleat softly, the just-milked cow lows gratefully in the pleasant sunshine. The ship's bell begins to toll for 'church.' Shut your

eyes, and you might fancy yourself in a village in Berks or Bucks.

Almost everyone on board a homeward-bound ship is free of Neptune, but bribes of grog will procure votaries to volunteer once more to do him honour at the Line.

A shout of 'Ship ahoy!' is heard in the brief mellow tropical gloaming. A confabulation follows between the officer of the watch and the unseen hailer, and then the mate sings out, 'Back the mainyard and fling his majesty a rope.' Neptune comes over the side, attended by his clerk and page, and is presented to the skipper, who in turn presents the ladies to him. Having given the captain a red herring, he demands a list of those whom he is to make free on the morrow. It is deferentially tendered, and pompously handed to the clerk, who deposits it in a 'shocking bad' white hat, worn after the manner of Ethiopian serenaders. His marine majesty then fixes the time at which he will return upon the morrow, is re-conducted to the side in semi-state, and takes his departure amid a blaze of blue-lights, and for some time afterwards his chariot of fire, a flaming

tar-barrel, can be seen rising and falling on the dim waters. Next day he returns in full state, boards at the bow, and is borne along the deck, seated on a gun-carriage, drawn by two bears, one of which turns its head and begins to swear in Dutch when the negro driver uses the whip too freely. Triton provides the music, performing, not on 'his wreathëd horn,' but on an accordion, 'Pop goes the Weasel.'. The suite consists of the sea-king's doctor, a practitioner with a wig like a furze-bush and a pair of lunettes, which give him exactly the look of a spectacled goose; the red-nightcapped, red-faced, red-shirted barber, farther arrayed in a huge cravat and stick-up collar of newspaper, displaying his rusty, jagged instruments of torture and mop-like shaving-brush; the clerk, who has exchanged his white for a livery hat, the page in blue cockade and sabre, and a posse of lettered and batoned constables. Amphitrite, nursing a baby and a brandy bottle, sits beside her lord, attired in the very height of the fashion, but incautiously displaying, when she raises her foot to give one of her subjects a right royal kick, a pair of ragged, tarry canvas trousers rolled up above her delicate

white stockings. His majesty is clad in sheepskin; he carries three herrings spitted on, his trident prongs, his crown is a notched soup and bouilli tin, curiously decorated with flags and stars and mermaids. Almost the only part of his face that is visible is the torch-like nose, peeping out from a leonine mane above a mat-like beard.

A studdingsail has been stretched between the bulwark and the booms to serve as a bath for the razees. Into this they are tumbled, heels over head, to have the loathsome lather washed off by the growling bears, who half drown them. A battle-royal succeeds; everyone trying to duck everybody else, or at least to drench, with buckets artfully emptied from the tops or swished from behind the galley. There is no quarrelling, but very uproarious songs are heard that night—whilst silent meteors are falling like laburnum blossoms—issuing from the forecastle, which has been rather over plentifully supplied with rum. Next morning, after the dirty duckings and fiery potations of the day before, a dip in the great tubful of fresh-pumped brine or a douche from the engine-hose when the watch are paddling about bare-legged,

swabbing the decks, is especially refreshing. A little later the ship is turned into one great laundry, and the rigging is draped with a curious medley of dripping garments hung up to dry.

The 'Swiftsure' passes gaily through water embroidered with Gulf Stream seaweed, but she is becalmed off the Azores, and Eris reigns from stem to stern. Stand-up fights come off before the foremast, one of which is put a stop to, amid roars of laughter, by a pendent dead pig, which swings, as the vessel rolls, between the pugilists, and meets with the usual unblessed fate of peacemakers—both of the combatants pitch into it.

But now the good ship is in the chops of the Channel, ploughing at night a golden furrow in the dark waves; her sharp cutwater throws up a golden spray; golden fish and porpoises are gambolling about her. A Falmouth smack has run under her stern, and passengers who have been absent from England for years have looked down with curious interest on boots splashed with English mud that very morning. The masts have been scraped, the painting is finished, the cable has been got up and hooked along the deck in rusty hanks. Sails are

seen all around by day upon the green, seaweedy water. After sundown lights all around dance upon it; all night long the look-outs keep on singing out, 'Light ahead,' 'Light on the weather bow,' &c.

As country folks in the old coaching times used to get excited by the rapidly-increasing number of vehicles after they had last changed horses on their road to London, so are the homeward-bound, who have been long away from home, excited in their run up Channel by the crowding craft. Up for the last time goes the fore lower studdingsail, the crew getting a good many of the passengers to help them as they run aft with the halyards, shouting, 'The girls have got hold of the towrope.' White cloud-like Beachy Head is sighted, and soon a white wall of cliff, with downs behind, can be made out. Preventive stations can be picked out with a glass, Hastings is plain to the naked eye. Churches, single cottages, coppices, patches of uncut corn, sportsmen with pointers at their heels are recognised with ease. The crew are stripping the canvas from the yards, and sending it down in lanky bundles like roley-poley puddings

in their cloths. Antwerp pilot boats, with big numbers branded on their mainsails, have glided over the green water, spotted with yellow and dull purple, to hail the 'Swiftsure,' but it is an English pilot she wants. The sea still looks wide and deep enough for many a ship to canter over unharmed, but the 'Swiftsure' just shaves past the barnacle-buttoned mastheads of a wreck. A tug comes alongside, and the master steps on board from the paddle-box. A bargain is struck, and she forges ahead to take the 'Swiftsure' in tow. The ship's crew, hanging over the side, exchange chaff with the tug's crew as she goes by; the exiles before referred to look with wonder upon men to whom English news is so common that they take their evening meal of fried fish out of greasy penny papers of that very day's date as they squat and sprawl upon their grimy deck. The sun is going down, sending over the fading sea, from a coppery sky which has extinguished the shore, a line of crimson and gold, across which small craft fuss like gnats. Dungeness Light presently flashes out, and the pilot comes on board. As the 'Swiftsure' passes through the Downs with peaked

yards, she has to thread a throng of ships—hundreds, nine-tenths English—which have been windbound, but are now hurrying out to sea as kept-in schoolboys, when they have been released, rush into the playground.

The stars come out, playing at bopeep between the rigging and bare spars. Row after row of glowworm-like lights glimmers on shore. Abreast of one of these, blue-lights are burnt, and a boat comes off for a bevy of passengers impatient to land.

Somehow or other, the crew have 'struck' grog, and seem inclined to strike the little work still left them to do. 'Sails' 'cheeks' the first mate; the mate, himself 'excited,' challenges his cheeker. The skipper, who likewise has been drinking, puts 'Sails' into irons. The crew reel aft, maudlinly menacing. The mate says they may mutiny if they like; he's put a bullet into a man before to-day; he'd have fought the fellow, not put him in irons, and he's ready to fight any man on board, crew or passengers, if they've got anything to say. Finally, to quiet the men, the captain releases the sailmaker. The 'Swiftsure,' just touching the

ground as she does so, brings up for the night under the lee of the Goodwin Lights ; but strife has not been composed on board. The first mate fights with the boatswain's mate and gives him a black eye. The second mate, in endeavouring to make peace, gets a punch in the mouth, and even the august pilot has his tall chimneypot hat knocked off. Everyone, however, is in good temper again next morning, when through buoyed, pea-soupy water, and dodging craft of every build and rig, the 'Swiftsure' pursues her course between the Kent and Essex marshes. The custom-house officer comes on board, the anchor is let go off Gravesend. Passengers rush ashore and hurry up to town by rail, and next tide the 'Swiftsure' finds her way into the docks more leisurely, and her crew scatter to find the various fates that may await them in the great city.

CHAPTER V.

RATCLIFF HIGHWAY.

RATCLIFF HIGHWAY has lost its P. O. name, and improved, to a certain extent, its manners—to a marvellous extent, say those whose recollection of it runs back some thirty years, but the Highway, under whatever name it may figure, will take a great deal of fining down before it ceases to be one of the most 'rowdyishly' rollicking quarters of London, even during business hours. At such times there is something very striking in the contrast between the 'drive' of the working-bees who throng it and the easy-goingness of the blue-jacketed or red-shirted drones—drones only for a week or two—who lounge and loaf about with their hands in their pockets and their pipes in their mouths, save when the pipes make way for the glass and the pewter pot, frequently recurring, which are fast

getting their emptiers into training for the brutal festivities of the evening, or inducing an insensate, insensible sottishness which will hand them over an easy prey to the despoilers of both sexes who hover around them like Greenland sharks about a wounded whale. 'Man is born to labour and to be lazy,' is an apophthegm which obtains piquant illustration in Ratcliff Highway by daylight, and when one notes how those who have got their turn of laziness there employ their leisure, it is impossible to refrain from wishing either that they had less of it, or that they had purer tastes for pleasure, coupled with better opportunities for their gratification.

The atmosphere of Aldgate is not that of Araby the blest, but, to speak metaphorically, a whiff of salt breeze meets you as you turn the corner of the Minories. There are nautical instruments in the shop windows, and navigation books—those grim-looking *biblia-a-biblia,* as Charles Lamb would have called them, which receive so droll a reverence from sailors to whom they are utterly incomprehensible, and also from those who have dabbled in them as a child wets its feet in the outermost foam-fringes of a broken wave. Jack, like

Sir Thomas Browne, loves to lose himself in a mystery, to pursue his reason to an *O altitudo*; although he may not be able to take one.

At the bottom of the Minories there are more signs of the sea: house-flags fluttering above drab, dead dock walls, ship-headed board bills in black, blue, and red types, leaning back to back, as children pile cards into wigwams; on one side the grey head-quarters of those whose business it is to see that warning and guiding lights flash out across the grey stormy waters; on the other a naval depôt, with its dingy tattered union-jack drooping over its smart, brawny quartermaster.

But it is mercantile Jack with whom we have to do, and in the Highway he is never out of sight.

English sailors, red-shirted American sailors, stalwart Norsemen, stolid Dutchmen, gesticulating Frenchmen, swarthy, black-bearded, ear-ringed Spaniards, ringleted Italians, moon-faced Germans with skim-milk eyes and greenish-yellow hair, piratical-looking Greeks, shivering Chinamen and Lascars, coffee-coloured mulattoes, and negroes as glossily black as a freshly-blacked boot—some grinning with a child-like good nature, and others

scowling like thunderclouds—here in scores you find them. They roll along singly or in couples like rolling ships, they stand yarning, or silently smoking, and not silently spitting, in groups of a dozen; they flatten their noses against private, as well as shop, window panes with a most amusing unconsciousness that they can be guilty of any liberty in striving to do their best to beguile what seems, by daylight, to be the tedium of their life ashore by seeing everything that is going; they pop away at the battered targets of pistol and rifle galleries open to the street, and patronise any show that invites them in with a glaring cartoon depicting beings of gigantic proportions; they buy penny dolls, glass penholders, plaster butterflies bobbing up and down on elastic, and all kinds of useless knick-knacks of the street sellers; they gravely inspect the portraits of hairy-breasted mariners, smart mates and midshipmen, and ship-stewards as imposingly uniformed, displayed in the photographers' frame, lend a ready ear to the seductive though husky voice of his red-nosed, worn-out toothbrush-moustached tout, and march up to the 'studio' in strings like geese; they mope over their

liquor, or liquor-less, in their lodging-houses, nodding their noses almost to the sanded floors, and then sally forth in quest of excitement to 'publics' which announce that 'Old Tom and all his relations live here,' or exhibit pictures on their doorposts of man-o'-war's men proffering cauliflower-headed pots of porter to all and sundry. Not unfrequently Jack gets too much excitement, and a row ensues, but, as a rule, serious brawls are reserved for night, when the fist is not the only weapon employed, but knives flash in the gaslight and inflict deadly stabs in the dark.

Of course people are born in the Highway, and live there till they die; but 'passing away' is the impression it produces on a visitant not to the manner born.

To speak less poetically, the most appropriate of the strains heard in it is—

> Rise up, Jack, and sit down, John,
> For I see you're outward bound.

What numbers of people must have come hither from abroad, and gone abroad hence!—is the thought that first rises in the mind of a wayfarer fresh to the locality, wandering along St. George's

Street, E., and its continuations. There are foreign houses of entertainment for Jack, American or pseudo-American, and north of Europe or south of Europe, according to his nationality: the Prussian eagle, the Bremen house, the German eagle, and so on, amongst the former, with appropriate ensigns and puffs of their accommodation in German text, yellow-painted on their window panes.

What a foreign look, too, the naturalists' shops have! Here is one with a foreign name on the lintel which links one with Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Oceania—with the torrid and both temperate and frigid zones. Grim beasts of prey are growling in the back yard. The dim shop, like a dark jungle, is lighted up by the milk-white, golden and gorgeously many-coloured plumage of its tenants, some perfect models of symmetry, and others with legs like stilts, necks like snakes, and bills like lobster claws. What a chirping, screaming, croaking, grunting, for there are beasts as well as birds in the shop. King parrots seem almost as common as London sparrows, and tortoises, brought from Africa as ballast, are sprawling in one corner like a shot sackful of coals.

Here again, in a still dimmer shop, with rainbow gleams shining through dust, we see nautilus shells, haliotids, murices, scalaria pretiosa, volutes, harps, cornets, thorn oysters, tridacna gigas; and, hard by, equally dust-dredged, genuinely Chinese china—parasols and pagodas, dragons and drooping willows, and funny little craft with deck-houses, sabots with turned-up toes, and pig-tailed heads with moon faces and almond eyes, in gilt, white, pink and blue; and bisected ostrich and emu egg and cocoanut shells, rimmed with silver, to serve as drinking cups.

The cochineal insect is coloured by the opuntia on which it feeds, and pawnbrokers' shops take their differentiating hues from the neighbourhoods which support them. In those of the Highway, plentifully salting the miscellanea found in all pawnbrokers' shops, may be seen greasy-brassed telescopes, binoculars perking up the muzzles of their double barrels, verdigrised quadrants and sextants, knives, and daggers, in sheaths of blue-moulded shark's skin and leather; rusty single and double-barrelled old-fashioned pistols, and more carefully kept revolvers; 'Norrie's Navigation,' and watches of a

queer variety of build and metal, which do not look so bright now as they did when they were polished by the frequent rubbing up and down they got in seamen's fobs.

What a study in numismatology is the Highway money-changer's shop, with its dirty, greasy, crumpled, oddly-charactered and illustrated bank-notes plastered on its grated window as if to remedy a multiplicity of cracks, and its wooden bowls full of bent, worn, scratched, pock-marked, clipped bits of gold, silver, bronze, copper, and nickel coin, scarcely distinguishable by colour.

And if there is much in the Highway to remind of inward voyages, there is still more to make one think of the outward bound.

Wooden captains and midshipmen, never weary of taking observations, by sunlight, by moonlight, by gaslight, and in the depth of all-obscuring fogs, outside nautical instrument shops, which sell also nautical almanacks, navigation books, barometers and compasses, telescopes, and speaking-trumpets. In other shops you see nothing but lamps—green-cased yellow-lettered binnacle lamps, starboard lamps, larboard lamys, and less carefully

protected, though locked, cabin lamps. In others, ships' wheels, yellow life-buoys, black-lettered, like garlands of *immortelles*, small anchors, huge blocks, little martello towers of tarred cordage, marline-spikes, 'grains,' zinc pails, and wooden buckets with rope handles.

The stocks of the outfitters who provide for crews instead of craft are as curious: hammocks, beds and bolsters of tick so broadly, brightly patterned that surely they must be intended to tempt 'loud'-tasted Sambo to recline upon a couch of sunflowers, woollen stockings, boots, black and buff, with soles that look as if they would not wear out on this side of the crack of doom; breeches of cloth and of duck, of canvas and of oilskin; check shirts, guernseys, blue and grey, and zebra-striped jerseys; variegated comforters, black neckties, piles of handkerchiefs that look like beds of red and yellow wallflowers; black satin waistcoats, rough flap-pocketed, bone or metal-buttoned waistcoats, sleeved like ostlers'; coats and jackets of dreadnought and dungaree, oilskin and tarpaulin; sou'-westers, low-crowned shiny hats, straw hats, plush caps, fur caps, Scotch bonnets, gilt-banded caps;

pots and pannikins that gleam like freshly-polished silver. The yellow oilskins, dully glimmering in the recesses of the shops, remind one somehow of the phosphorescence of bad fish hung up in the dark; rows of stiff-armed, stiff-legged suits of oil-skin, crowned with sou'-westers, sway in the wind outside the shops, making one think of strung-up pirates. In Ratcliff Highway, however, Jack is rather the victim than the victimiser. The vendors who tilt their armchairs in their doorways, or tout for custom upon the pavement, address him in an affectionate 'Will you walk into my parlour? said the spider to the fly' tone, and 'Seamen's advance notes cashed' frequently figures on a bill prominently displayed in their banian grove of drooping garments.

The recipients of a very considerable portion of Jack's money on account, as of the wages for which he has worked like a horse to spend them like an ass, are not far to find. In broad daylight they flaunt about, bare-headed and bare-breasted, in dingy white muslin dresses or flimsy, mud-splashed, liquor-stained, greased silks. Their generally loathsome faces are painted, their bold

eyes are often 'painted,' too, or undisguisedly blackened ; their utterances call to mind the eruption of a mud volcano.

'Be instructed, my son, by the pleasures of them which have no understanding. Wherefore pluck they the apples whose cores are of ashes?'

'Why, indeed?' you feel inclined to exclaim in Ratcliff Highway—'especially when the outside of the apple is repulsively rotten.' The Calypsos of the Highway are themselves most porcine.

Not far from the Highway there is a music-hall much patronised by Jack, who grins when he sees waiters in livery and white neckcloths hurrying towards him with steaming tumblers of toddy, foaming measures of stout, cigars, cheroots, and screws of tobacco, 'just as if he was a lord.' This hall is frequented by those of the wretched creatures I have referred to who are civilised enough to wear bonnets and mantles, and they make the round of it, inspect, pick out, and carry off their blue-jacket prey exactly like butchers buying pigs or calves at market.

A paved alley, in which, as the little painted ensigns on the window panes show, sailors nume-

rously take their shore-going lodgings, leads down into the Highway, which has woke up for its revelry by night. Drunken sailors are staggering about; some have fraternised with foot-guards, also out for a spree; a few, that are very drunk, are being wheedled by 'duffers' into buying brass rings for gold, and packets of dry horse-dung for smuggled tobacco; a good many have been taken in tow by those bareheaded Barefaced to whom it is painful to have to refer so frequently, but who cannot be kept out of a description of Ratcliff Highway, since in fact they swarm in it.

Behind the bars of a good many of the Highway public-houses there are dancing-rooms, which are also drinking-rooms, in which these lost creatures assemble to make their captures. Some may be termed miscellaneous houses; others are specially patronised by foreign sailors according to their nationalities. It is very seldom that a pretty face is to be seen amongst the poor wretches: when seen, it is a pathetic sight, for it shows that another once pure girl has just fallen, like a flower into a sewer. Good looks do not last long in Ratcliff Highway.

Some of these unfortunates are middle-aged women, others little more than children ; some the very dregs of prostitution, more like rain-drenched miry scarecrows than human beings, whilst others array themselves in high-heeled, tasselled red boots, open-work stockings, embroidered petticoats, and very *décolleté* evening dresses of sham fine material. Drinking freely themselves, and whirled round by drunken partners, they dance—in the manner that might be expected.

Opium-smoking is the shore delight of the Oriental Jack. I have heard that there are no longer any opium-houses in London to which he can resort, as formerly, to indulge his seductive but most pernicious taste in company. I am inclined to think, however, that such places must still be in existence in some hole or corner.

I will finish this sketch of Jack enjoying himself with a few words about two opium-houses I visited more than once three or four years ago in Bluegate Fields. They were situated in a court off Victoria Street, to which it was joined by a covered passage through which single passengers had almost to sidle.

The first house called at was the one described in 'Edwin Drood.'

Dirt and darkness were its chief characteristics. In a dirty, dimly-lighted room, whose atmosphere was not improved by the fumes of wet clothes slowly steaming before a feeble fire—on a dirty bed lay a dirty, black-moustached East Indian, shamming to be asleep, but occasionally interchanging growls, with meaning in them, with his dirty, sluttishly-dressed English 'wife,' who lay at the other end of the bed, manipulating her ruler-like, shallow-bowled pipe, pin-spatula, and lamp. 'It's very healthy,' she said, when she had taken a long pull at the lighted pill, and sent out the smoke through her ears and nostrils. 'When the cholera was about none of our houses took it.' The craving for drink—and of this her experience had not been limited—was, she said, nothing in comparison with the craving for opium. 'I've broke myself of that; but if you can't get a pipe when you want it, it's like as if you was having electric shocks one after another, or as if you was having a knife scraped along your bare bones.'

On the other side of the court, in a very similar

house, apparently about to tumble down like Judas, lived another Englishwoman, with a Chinaman 'husband' who, however, answered to the very English name of Johnson, instead of Ong Him or Ki Li. Pallid, yellow-white Johnson, the first time I called upon him, was lying on a dirty bed, twitching like a galvanised corpse as he tried to light his opium-pill. A pull or two soothed him, and he began to puff the wares—sickly scents in white and pink penny packets—of his lodger, a young Chinaman, but of a different province and dialect, who could only carry on conversation with his host or his English visitors in 'pigeon-English.' The pleasant, almost oppressively polite, young fellow was seated at a little round table, reading, with gleaming teeth as well as eyes, a history of the Taeping rebellion, in Chinese. Johnson lighted his visitors to the door most courteously, but when I turned and saw him at it, holding his flickering candle above his shaded eyes as he peered into the fog, I could not help wishing that I might not happen to lie near any opium-smoking Chinaman at the resurrection.

On another occasion Johnson was as frolicsome

as a kitten, as he lounged with his customers on the greasy bedding spread on his ground-floor. He joked and laughed loudest at his own jokes. He took a pull at the opium-pipe, and then passed it on to, indeed, put it into the mouth of, a Lascar, like the one tooth of the Grææ. This Lascar was lying half asleep on another Lascar wholly asleep. Puffing away at a Manilla cheroot, Johnson held the light for his almost insensible customer. A young Chinaman stood up in the middle of the room, grinning from ear to ear, and chuckling like a clucking hen, and a huge swarthy fellow, from Singapore, suddenly burst into song. It seemed to Occidental ears a very monotonous *Ay-ay-ay, yah-yah-yah, ay-ay-ay, yah-yah-yah* melody, but it stirred all the Orientals present—even the sleep-sodden Lascar—to hearty laughter; and Johnson approvingly pronounced it to be 'Nice—nice—ver good cantic.'

CHAPTER VI.

SAILORS' HOMES.

IN spite of Parliament, and sometimes righteously rough remonstrance and resistance, the runners of crimp lodging-house keepers and slopsellers board the ship before she can get fairly into dock, and fasten upon Jack like vermin dropping from a ceiling. Of course, some keepers of sailors' lodging-houses are very respectable people, but so many are not, that it is fortunate for a sailor who does not know of a comfortable lodging-house where he will be conscientiously treated, if he has obtained a Sailors' Home card from the dock companies' boatmen, or Trinity House or Thames Mission officials, at Gravesend, or in coming up Channel, and puts his chest or bundle into a cart waiting at the docks to convey boarders to the spacious, cosy, nautical club-house, with bedrooms, which has ex-

panded from Well Street to Dock Street. There are Sailors' Homes now in Bristol, Devonport, Dover, Falmouth, Gloucester, Great Yarmouth, Hull, Liverpool, Milford, North Shields, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Sunderland, Southampton, Cardiff, Swansea, Belfast, Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Queenstown, Glasgow, Greenock, Leith, Stornoway, Sydney, Melbourne, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Vancouver's Island, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, New York, Boston, San Francisco, Marseilles, Havre, Amsterdam, Rotterdom, Hamburg, and Callao: they are all the offspring of the institution which was started forty years ago hard by the London Docks. During that space of time it has accommodated more than a quarter of a million of boarders, of whom about a third have repeatedly visited it: Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Welshmen; men from the Channel Islands, British North America, the United States, France, Russia, Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain, and other countries washed by the Mediterranean; Sweden and Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Portugal, Switzerland, Lapland, the Cape of Good Hope, and Mauritius, the

West Coast of Africa, the West Indies, the East Indies, China, Australia and New Zealand, Brazils and other parts of South America, South Sea Islands, and nearly 200 born at sea. More than two millions sterling has been deposited in the Home's bank since its establishment; more than 700,000*l.* remitted by depositors to their families and friends.

The history of such an institution is worth recording.

Admiral Gambier and the late Captains James Elliot and Robert Justice, R.N., were its founders. In the winter of 1827 these benevolent officers, distressed by the sight of scores of sailors who, after having been sucked like oranges, were thrown into the gutter like the peel, resolved to provide lodgings for poor Jack, in which he would get good money's worth for his money. The Brunswick Theatre fell, and the site and materials were bought for the erection of the Sailors' Home.

Captains Elliot and Gambier used to mount the ruins every morning with the labourers, and inaugurate the day's work with prayer. Captain Elliot took humble lodgings near the Home, and

watched over it like Dibdin's little cherub until he died. The neighbourhood now is not one which an officer and gentleman of blue blood would select as a residence on account of its amenity, but it was far worse during the eighteen years throughout which Captain Elliot lodged in it.

In 1830 the foundation stone of the Sailors' Home was laid, and five years afterwards it was opened for 100 men. In spite of the opposition of 'vested interests,' it was soon appreciated. Indeed it was sometimes so crowded that, in sailor's phrase, the boarders had to prick for the softest plank. Queen Adelaide, as a sailor king's wife, fitted up one dormitory at her own expense. In 1863 Lord Palmerston laid the chief stone of the handsome extension into Dock Street, and in May 1865—thirty years after the opening of the old building—the new was added to it.

Let us have a ramble over the whole pile, descending first to the basement, like true Englishmen, because it holds the kitchen. It is a clean, spacious chamber, well appointed with modern cooking apparatus, gas oven, and brick oven for bread, and pervaded by that rich, warm perfume

which tells of generous living, so unlike the thin, stale odour, ghost as it were of long bygone cooking, even while it lasted never very liberal, which haunts some kitchens. The cook wears his white cap of office like a crown, and, indeed, what officer of the institution is, in one sense, more potent than he? There is no stinting at the Sailors' Home. Breakfast, from 8 to 9.30 A.M., consists of coffee, bread and butter, boiled beef and fish; dinner, from 1 to 2.30, of soup, roast and boiled meat, meat pies (and game, when a judicious haul has been made in Leadenhall Market, overstocked late on Saturday night), vegetables, fruit pies and plum pudding—a very different comestible from the average pips-and-putty galley plumduff—with ale or porter. Tea, from 5.30 to 6.30 P.M., of tea, bread and butter, and salad vegetables; and supper, from 9 to 9.30, of bread and cheese and malt liquor. Boarders can bring in their shipmates to these meals at charges of for breakfast or tea *9d.*, dinner *1s.*, supper *6d.*; *6d.* is the charge for a sleeping cabin for a single night. For board and a separate cabin for a week the charge is *15s.*, for a day *2s. 3d.* The cook has, I

believe, always practised his profession at sea. One that I had a yarn with had been four times wrecked, and had been out in the Crimea during the Russian war, and in India at the time of the mutiny.

Down in the basement there are, further, a room in which boarders too late for regular meal-times can obtain refection, a larder, a pantry, and a store crammed with groceries, crockery, &c.; coal and beer cellars, into which good-sized craft might be unloaded; a barber's shop; hot and cold baths always ready; a laundry, in which a man can get his clothes washed cheaply in a few hours, and store-rooms in which he can deposit luggage. In another room an excellent master is teaching navigation clearly, in spite of the pleasant mist of tobacco-smoke with which his pupils surround him. In the recreation-room, in a similar atmosphere of summer haze, the bagatelle players knock the balls about, and bronzed chess players and draught players ponder their next moves, as if their lives depended on them, with chins resting on bent arms sprawled upon the table after the manner of crab claws. Nicotiana reigns likewise in the racket

ground and the skittle alley, resounding with the rumble of rolling balls and the clash of scattered pins. In the basement a steam-engine pumps up water to the 4,000-gallon cistern for the supply of the lavatories and the hydrants and hose with which every floor is provided; and down to the basement dives the luggage-lift, which communicates with every floor. On the ground-floor, besides the secretary's office, the bank, dormitories, the clothing department, at which boarders can purchase good outfits at reasonable prices; the refreshment rooms, open from 6 A.M. to midnight, at which they can buy unadulterated beer, ginger beer, tobacco, tea and coffee, pastry, &c., and the post-office, to which they can have their letters addressed when they are absent from the Home, there are two halls. Here you may see scores of sailors, of almost every nation, colour, size, and rig, patrolling singly or in couples, in those brief walks, with abrupt turning on the heel, which Jack affects, standing in knots or seated along the walls, jerking out a word now and then, or quite silent, yarning, laughing, larking, smoking, spitting—occasionally, it must be admitted, steering rather

wildly—but making their wide 'boards' with smiling benignity of countenance. After dinner a fiddle strikes up, and Jack has a dance in the Well Street lobby.

On the first floor, to which a wide fireproof staircase leads, there are rooms used for religious purposes; a book depository; a map-hung reading-room and library (which contains 'Roderick Random'), a mess-room for masters and mates, who pay a trifle more than the men for their accommodation, and the noble dining-hall, decorated with a clock, the model of a frigate, and marble busts.

Oh, how unlike is dinner here to the ordinary dinner in a forecastle! Here you might almost eat your food off the floor, a real live clergyman says grace, and in addition to plenty of varied food, capitally cooked, Jack has comfortable earthenware table equipage instead of tin plates and pannikins, and, actually, white tablecloths.

The second and third floors are devoted to dormitories, with cabins in tiers. Each cabin (8 ft. 2 in. by 5 ft. 1 in., and 7 ft. 2 in. high) is provided with a bedstead, coir mattress, pillow, rug, two sheets, two blankets, chair, and a copy of the

Scriptures. These state-rooms are ventilated by 'Venetians'; there is a white number-plate on each door, and each boarder keeps the key of his own berth. In spite of the greatest attention to cleanliness on the part of the officials, it has been found next to impossible to prevent the very miscellaneous boarders from introducing unpleasant, non-paying inmates into the house; but its general sanitary arrangements are so good that when cholera raged around it, it was a secure asylum against that awful disease. I may add that it supplies medical attendance daily, and medicine free of charge. And all this is done without any interference with the legitimate liberty of Jack Ashore.

Two of its old boarders have shown their appreciation of the Home in an interesting manner. Over its drinking-fountain the directors have placed a marble tablet, with this inscription:

THE GIFT OF

WILLIAM McNEIL, SEAMAN,

IN APPRECIATION OF THE GREAT BENEFITS HE HAS DERIVED ON THE VARIOUS OCCASIONS DURING WHICH HE HAD MADE THIS INSTITUTION HIS HOME FOR UPWARDS OF TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.

Another old boarder, who began to bank with the Home more than twenty years ago, retired to it to die when he had risen from man to master, and left it 100*l.*, after providing for his mother and friends and 430*l.* more to other societies and institutions for the benefit of seamen.[1]

Let us take a run still farther east. The train rumbles over a basin in which timber is rocking; sailing barges and billyboys, laden almost to the cross-trees, are grinding against the quays; coal is being whipped out of colliers' holds and rattled into the gaunt black barges alongside. More coal is piled and stacked upon the wharfs, contrasting oddly with interspersed, almost snowdrift-like, heaps of lime. Other craft are discharging rusty iron, rod and rails, chairs and pig, with a jangle like the cymbal-clash of some Devil's-Own band; and others again landing broken road-metal to add to the table-lands of the same that stretch along the water side.

[1] The faithful, courteous, commonsensical service which Captain W. H. Webb, R.N., gave it, as its secretary, for fifteen years, ought to be recognised in any notice of the Sailors' Home.

Both breeze and ballasting grow moister as the train, passing funny little houses with funny little gardens, funny little arbours, and funny little flag-staves, skirts the marshy Isle of Dogs and docks. High tower, far stretch the dead walls of the West India Docks' warehouses, with their slate-coloured doors and gibbet-like cranes, and, beyond the West India, the waters of the Millwall Docks shimmer in the sunlight with a leaden lustre. The sun may shine, but darkies from the east and west and south, heedless of the landlord's painted request to his customers not to sit upon his steps, crouch on those of a public-house hard by the docks—shivering, stamping their feet like impatient horses, and cudling their hands in their armpits.

The train dashes into the very midst of shipping. Bowsprits and figure-heads, white, black, blue, red, and gilt, protrude over the line. Instead of rushing into the water, however, the train runs into the Blackwall terminus, and a step or two thence will take any passenger disposed to visit them into the East India Docks, where some of the largest and finest craft, both steam and sailing, that hail from London may be seen; and farther

on, in the Plaistow marshes, are the Victoria Docks.

The district thus roughly indicated supplies the bulk of the inmates of another Home—the handsome Strangers' Home in the West India Dock Road, to which Lieut.-Col. Hughes disinterestedly devotes his life. It is not exclusively a Sailors' Home, its object being 'to offer to every class of Orientals, Africans, and Polynesians, who come to England, a comfortable and respectable lodging, with wholesome food, at a cost which shall render the institution self-supporting.' When I visited the Home, a nephew of the late King of Delhi was one of its lodgers. But the bulk are sailors, whom the Home, for a reasonable sum, provides with accommodation, including medical attendance, baths and washing, in accordance with their tastes, whom it protects from imposition, and for whom it finds ships.

The study of the faces and figures—even when clad in European costume instantly distinguishable as non-European—to be met with in the Home: Aryan, Mongolian, Malay, Papuan, Ethiopic—may be termed ethnology made easy, and artists have

only to travel as far east as Limehouse station if they wish to limn Eastern costume from a copious variety of living models. The Home's album of the portraits of members of the sundry and very diverse nationalities it befriends is a curiosity in photography.

Of the 'spiritual agency' in connection with the Strangers', as of that in connection with the Sailors' Home, I shall write elsewhere.

In reference to the 'temporal' benefits conferred upon its clients by the Strangers' Home, I will simply add here that, although one of its rules is—'No one can be admitted into the Home without payment,' it has, since it was opened in 1857, 'gratuitously boarded, in most cases clothed, and in all sent, at good wages, to their homes,' nearly 1,400 previously utterly destitute Lascars, &c. The Home certainly has a right to its motto, 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers.'

CHAPTER VII.

SEAMEN'S WIVES AND CHILDREN.

'ENOCH ARDEN' is a touching as well as a beautiful poem; and Mrs. Sewell has written a pretty pathetic little ballad, entitled 'Davie Blake,' about a sailor's wife, who really was a widow, but fact comes more home to one than fancy, when met with, not in print, but on the pavement.

'There,' said my companion when a faded, care-worn woman in faded shabby black had passed us in Well Street, London Docks, 'that poor creature doesn't know whether she's a widow or not. Her husband sailed two years ago, and has never been heard of—no doubt lost with all hands.'

Seamen's wives and children are certainly a pity-moving class of the community. The wives of land labourers in receipt of weekly wages often get a very insufficient proportion of the same for house-

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hold expenses—the pinched, weeping wives who peer into the public-houses in which their husbands are sucking in liquor like sponges are a pathetic spectacle, but the seaman's wife very frequently has not even a *chance* for months of getting any money for the house except what she earns herself. The owners of the ship in which her husband has sailed often will not allow her a monthly note for his half-pay, or refuse to pay it on some slight pretext, or perhaps the man comes home, crimps and prostitutes get hold of him whilst he is waiting for his pay, and he has to ship again, a beggar—let us hope a remorseful one—without having seen his family, or contributed a farthing to their support. Sometimes he has squandered money sent him by his wife to bring him to her. Is it wonderful that, under the circumstances, seamen's wives and children so often go to the bad? Captain Toynbee, who knows the British merchant service as well as any man, having entered it 'by the hawse-holes and come out by the cabin windows,' writes thus: 'During my last voyage I talked over this subject with eight married men in the crew, and found that their own wives were favourably circumstanced, earning something for

themselves, and most of them living with their friends. But they could all tell a sad tale of widely different cases: of sailors' wives at public-houses all day long; of wives left without half-pay; of one even forced to pawn her wedding-ring, yet keeping respectable; and, most numerous of all, of women going utterly wrong during the absence of their husbands.' On the other hand, it is only fair to state that the Rev. Dan. Greatorex, the energetic and ingeniously practical Vicar of St. Paul's, Dock Street, whose river-side parish contains in its thronged population of 9,000 a great many seamen's wives, assures me that he has only known one instance in which a sailor's wife, if virtuous before marriage, behaved in such a way as even to raise a suspicion as to her chastity, although he has known several instances in which fallen women have proved true wives to sailors, however protracted their husbands' absence. 'They will bear,' he writes of sailors' wives, 'the greatest privations. They generally try to get needlework, washing or charing. I visited a family two days since; the woman covered umbrellas at two shillings per dozen, and, if regularly employed, can earn two shillings per day of

sixteen hours; but if she earns four shillings per week it is as much as she can get regularly. There were five children, eldest a boy, earns two shillings per week, four younger ones only had six articles of clothing between them, no shoes or socks; the woman only three articles upon her, stays being one of them. They were almost starving. Her husband was paid off in Melbourne, having quarrelled with his captain. The family must have suffered terribly during the past year, yet her character is unimpeachable.' If Hood had heard this story, he would have managed to make a pathetic pun on that poor woman not 'missing stays' in her stormy course through life.

Mr. Greatorex thinks that merchant seamen ought to receive higher pay, but wages can only be really settled by the state of supply and demand, and I do not see how, as things stand, a seaman's family would, as a rule, be benefited by his obtaining seemingly more adequate remuneration for his hard work. Those who prey upon him, not those who are supposed to depend upon him, would, most probably, pocket the additional pay. I am inclined to think with Captain Toynbee, that if the money

earned by a sailor at present were properly dispensed and husbanded, it, added to his wife's earnings (sailors' wives are not the only women who have to help keep the house) would enable his family to live in far greater comfort than at present, and secure them some little provision in case of his death. Crimps and prostitutes are the sailors' leeches—not for his health—*hirudines* that will not give up their hold even when *plenæ cruoris*. Fish is crimped to make it firm, surely poor Jack has been 'crimped' often enough to make him a little firmer.

The captain and the clergyman agree in thinking that special lodgings, near the docks, should be provided for seamen's families, and that, though let at considerably lower rents than are now paid for the often wretched rooms the families at present occupy, such buildings ought to be self-supporting, whether constructed specially for the purpose or 'converted' out of old houses. Eighteenpence or two shillings a week is said to be the rent which seamen's families could on the average afford. At present, in London, they pay a good deal more for single rooms.

Wellclose Square is a favourable specimen of the sailors' wives' homes in St. Paul's parish, It was once a very rowdy place, but in still remoter years it had been an aristocratic place, in the days before some of the present aristocratic squares had been built or thought of. Some of its houses still have eight-stalled stables behind them, and one or two preserve something of their old dignified appearance in front, in spite of their dinginess. They are almost all let out in single rooms. In one tenement some seventy people are huddled. In the centre of the square, where the old Danish church used to stand, or rather threaten to fall, Mr. Greatorex has raised, and surrounded with grass and trees, as handsome a pile of schools as can be seen in London. They accommodate nearly one thousand scholars, a good many of them the children of seamen, and the founder looks sharply after truants as he goes about his parish.

'Why are you not at school, my boy?' he asks, as he lays his hand on an urchin—a sea-urchin's head.

'Plaze, sir-r-r, I'm Irish.'

'Then why are you not at the Catholic school? I'll send the officer after you.'

When I last visited the schools, the morning being warm and bright, some of the youngsters were taking their lessons in the open air. Two sailors' children had been excused from work on the ground of slight indisposition, and were looking between the playground rails with great contentment; one was the orphan son of a ship-wrecked sailor, the other was a sailor's daughter, a roguish little mite, with hair like flax, and eyes like its flower, who had the audacity to make grimaces like a rabbit at her spiritual pastor and master.

Thirteen orphan daughters of seamen are clothed by the schools. I may add that an annual foreign bird show is held in them for their benefit—a show which is confidently pronounced to be the finest in England. Not far from the schools there is another interesting building. The sailors' and dock labourers' wives who constitute so large a proportion of the population of St. Paul's parish, having to work for their living, cannot look after their babies by day; if they leave them in charge of elder

children, those children are kept away from school, and, moreover, they are often very inefficient nurses, and the streets are a very comfortless nursery. Mr. Greatorex accordingly has opened a very comfortable one—the best appointed *crêche* I ever saw—for his poor parishioners' babies. There on weekdays, from eight A.M. to eight P.M., the little wee tots are received and very kindly looked after. Every mother is expected to bring her child clean, and is shown *how* to wash it, if a bungler in maternal duties. The nursery contains neat little hammocks in which the very little ones are swung off to sleep, a padded 'fold,' enclosed with a padded rail, in which they tumble and learn to stand alone, a rocking-chair which will carry ever so many at once, and toy bricks, &c., which those who can just toddle knock about to their hearts' content. Whilst the babies are asleep, these slightly bigger mites go through some play lessons in another room, but they leave and return to their class at their pleasure, and look up to their nurses, and trot up to their bachelor proxy papa with a confidence that shows how tenderly they are treated. One little thing, not higher than my knee, who came to be swung up by her

clergyman, had only one arm to put round his neck; she had lost the other through a fall. The place is spotlessly clean and warmed with heated, not burnt air, and the windows are so constructed that it is impossible for a child to fall out of them. On the ground-floor, beneath the nursery, there is a room for mothers' meetings, at which poor women are supplied with materials at cost price and taught to cut out and make clothes by a mission woman under the direction of a lady superintendent. These poor sailors' wives are also provided with boxes of clothing, tea, sugar, &c., at the time of their confinement, and when the box is returned, a suit is given to the infant and eighteenpence to the mother. In the basement there is a kitchen in which the schoolgirls are taught to cook for the nursery, the sick, and the poor who are fed there daily, either gratuitously or at cost price.

All this is very commendable, but it must be remembered that only a small portion of the poor of St. Paul's parish—which I have taken as a typical seamen's family parish—can derive benefit from these charities, and, after all, ought British seamen's families to have to depend on charity? Is it not

true,' writes Captain Toynbee, 'that sailors spend more money in supporting gin-shops and houses of bad fame than would support all their widows and orphans, and pension old and worn-out seamen into the bargain?'

CHAPTER VIII.

PORTS IN A STORM.

A VISITOR to the Sailors' Home kitchen may often see in it a cook of a different stamp from that of its white-capped *chef*—the cook of the neighbouring Destitute Sailors' Asylum, gathering up into a bucket the fragments of the larger institution's feasts. He is of many sizes, many ages, many colours, many nationalities—sometimes a 'Portugee,' sometimes a negro, sometimes a Chinaman—the last I saw there was a native of Goulburn, N.S.W. The crusts and broken meat he carries off to supplement the meal of good ox-tail soup which the inmates of the asylum will receive at six P.M.—the sick amongst them always, and all, in bitter winter weather, have a noontide meal of soup or coffee. In the morning they breakfast on porridge and biscuit, and then those who can go out to look for

work. The asylum is a very cheaply managed charity. Besides the cook extemporised from the ever-shifting beneficiaries, the permanent superintendent, who is an old sailor, and a night watchman constitute the whole staff. The night watchman has his post on a kind of dark quarter-deck reached by a ladder raised above the first floor, in which the brown-rugged hammocks are slung. The ground-floor is the living-room. Its deals are well scrubbed and sanded. Its furniture consists of forms and tables, and a little library of Bibles in many languages and very dingy bindings. The offices are on the ground-floor.

Applicants for admission must, except in case of very severe distress, apply between the hours of five and eleven P.M. and prove that they have not been ashore from their last ships more than twelve months. Their clothes and persons are carefully examined before they are admitted to the asylum, in which two afternoons a week are set apart for washing. If any inmate will not keep himself clean, or persists in any other bad habit, he is summarily discharged. If he will not take suitable work when found for him, he receives 48 hours' notice to quit. Should

he obtain temporary employment at the docks, he is expected to spend his earnings on clothes, or to hand them over to the superintendent to be laid out on an outfit when he does get a ship. Except under peculiar circumstances, the summer limit of shelter at the asylum is eleven days, the winter a fortnight. Religious influences are brought to bear on the men during their stay in the place, but of this part of its arrangements I need not speak here.

The asylum, it will be seen, is not a cosseting, but, though a sensible, it is also a very genuine charity. It was founded by the excellent officers who established the Sailors' Home, and during less than fifty years of existence has harboured more than 50,000 penniless tars. Of course a good many of these had brought their destitution on themselves; but, to say nothing of humanity, it would not be good policy in an economic point of view to let a dissipated seaman go utterly to the dogs; and besides, we must remember that a good deal of sailors' drunkenness and debauchery, with consequent misery, is in a measure forced upon them. It is noteworthy that the highest item in

the asylum's table of admittances is almost always, if not always, 'From boarding-houses, &c. in London.' Moreover, a man may be shipwrecked, laid up in hospital, or temporarily disabled by sickness or accident. If a hard-up sailor honestly seeks work, and will behave himself, the asylum will help him, however he got into his difficulties. In this way a good many worthy fellows have been saved from extreme wretchedness, and scores not so worthy taught, let us hope, a little sense. The harpies of the Highway swarm about the asylum, but they do not lavish their brazen blandishments on its inmates. Asylum Jack, clear-headed for once, can watch their game as an onlooker, while the bedizened creatures try to lure his more pecunious mates away from or out of the Home. Surely, if not a born fool, he must get an edifying lesson from the disgusting spectacle.

The Destitute Sailors' Asylum passes on sick seamen to hospitals, and receives convalescent seamen from them. Of all hospitals likely to hold sailors, that specially devoted to them at Greenwich (although in cases of emergency it has taken in hundreds of landsmen and women to save them

a journey to Guy's or St. Thomas's) is the most interesting.

Greenwich is emphatically a 'briny' place, in spite of its distance from the sea: so is Wapping, but at Greenwich the salt in the air has a far purer or more piquant savour. The old 'Collegemen,' the blue 'geese' that used to waddle about the streets,— so pleasant to look upon, although often with so much growling dissatisfaction to themselves, are gone; but younger Naval Collegers, in the educational sense, have taken their place in the noble pile of grey and black and red which Webb, Wren, Vanbrugh and Stuart raised at the foot of the green-wooded hill, crowned with the red observatory that observes and calculates for mariners all the world over—the palace which 'Dutch William's' tender-hearted English wife turned into an hospital for English sailors. Sir George Rooke took from the French the block of marble out of which Rysbrack carved the statue of George II. in the quadrangle. There is an obelisk in honour of that gallant Frenchman, Lieut. Bellot, planted on the river bank. English admirals, from the time of the utterly vanquished

Invincible Armada, look down from the walls of the Painted Hall. It holds the astrolabe which Queen Elizabeth gave to Sir Francis Drake, and is rich in relics of Lord Nelson. The figure-head of Admiral Anson's ship used to figure at the end of one of the hospital's wards, and part of its property accrues from the effects of Kidd, the pirate. The palace which Inigo Jones built for Henrietta Maria has expanded into the Royal Naval School, with its fish-out-of-water-like training corvette; a frigate is anchored in front of the college as admiral's flag-ship, and a little higher up there used to lie a noble three-decker, inscribed 'Hospital für Seeleute,' 'Hospital for Seamen,' 'Supported by Voluntary Contributions,' 'For Sailors of all Nations.' This was the 'Caledonia' (120 guns), re-christened 'Dreadnought,' after the 104-gun ship which she succeeded in 1857, and which from 1821 to 1831 had been preceded by the 'Grampus,' 50 guns. A raw gap was made in the Thames-scape when the last floating hospital was towed down the river. A ship had seemed so appropriate an hospital for seamen, but in reality it was not. Its ventilation was defective, its light

was dim, the noises in it and about it worried in-patients, and out-patients experienced a difficulty in getting to it. Accordingly, in exchange for the relinquished ship, the Seamen's Hospital Society obtained a 99 years' lease, at 1*s.* per annum, of the Infirmary and Somerset Ward of Greenwich Hospital, emptied of all save a few infirm old pensioners who had no friends to go to when the general exodus from the college took place. These make a nobly spacious hospital, with pleasant basking-grounds for convalescents, but it must be remembered that the loan of the premises is the only aid which the hospital receives from Government. Her Majesty and several other crowned heads subscribe to it as individuals; some governments and corporations also contribute; but, on the whole, it cannot be said to be adequately supported, depending as it does mainly on annual subscriptions. It literally carries out its title, receiving, without any recommendation save their need of care, sick seamen of all nations.

Since its foundation it has received about 113,000—English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, French, German, Russian, Finlanders, Dutchmen, Danes,

Swedes and Norwegians, Italians, Portuguese, Spaniards, East and West Indians, British Americans, United States men, South Americans, Africans, Turks, Greeks, Maories, Australians, South Sea Islanders, and nearly 200 born at sea. In the museum of the hospital there is a very curious and also ghastly collection of the skulls of all nations; a good many of them those of unclaimed patients. When I visited the hospital (on which occasion, by the bye, I met one of the old pensioners, nearly 100 years old—what experiences his must have been!—tottering in to his dinner on the arm of a smiling, buxom nurse) I saw in one ward a Lascar's head sinking in the pillow like a block of charred mahogany in melting snow, a negro showing his white teeth in a broad grin even on a sick bed, and a blue-eyed young fellow who told me he came from 'Norvie.' A good many Norsemen are admitted into the hospital, and masters of Norse vessels are some of its most regular supporters.[1]

[1] The Poplar Hospital for Accidents, opposite the entrance to the East India Docks, unpretending, but most admirably managed, is another institution, from which sailors derive benefit, sorely in need of funds.

There is an old story told of an advocate of peace principles who, after having adduced a great variety of humanitarian objections to war, thus clinched his argument against it, 'Besides, it doesn't pay.' That is a reason which often tells, when considerations of humanity have failed to convince, and merely as a matter of the pocket, it would be well if Great Britain did more for her sick merchant sailors.

'I have no hesitation in saying,' exclaims Captain Bedford Pim, 'that no nation in the world treats its sick seamen so utterly disgracefully as we do. Unless they suffer from some accident, or can get a governor's ticket, they may rot in the streets for all Great Britain cares.'

This is rather an emphatic way of stating the matter. Sailors are not the only working-men who need governor's letters to get them into hospitals. Still there is something exceptional in sick Jack's case, and it seems strange that shipowners, at any rate, do not, in their own interests, recognise this, and make provision for his accommodation and cure when he has been invalided. Dr. Sandford, now or recently inspector of seamen, &c. and

principal medical officer of the Seamen's Hospital at Cardiff, states that many seamen ship when suffering from the most loathsome and contagious diseases, muffling themselves up in clothes in order to conceal their condition. The consequence is that not only are they good for nothing, but they soon render others good for nothing also, whilst the men who preserve their health have, most unfairly, double or treble labour thrust upon them. In 1867 Parliament gave shipowners power, if they chose to make use of it, to insist on a medical inspection of offering crews, but they do not choose to make use of it. 'Sailors are scared enough as it is,' they say. 'If we insist on inspection, and reject the bad, we shall not only not be able to get enough men of any sort, but we shall have to raise the wages of the good men.' Some 17,000 seamen are annually shipped at Cardiff. In the year during which Dr. Sandford held the post of inspector of seamen there, he was called upon to inspect just four, all of whom he sent to hospital. Sickness, especially that disease to which the circumstances of their lives peculiarly expose them, prevailed so frightfully amongst seamen at Cardiff, that at

length the great landlord of the place, the Marquis of Bute, and the town authorities applied to the Admiralty for a ship to convert into a floating hospital. The 'Hamadryad' was granted, and Dr. Sandford, who had acquired medical experience, both in the army and the navy, fitted her out.

The Cardiff sailors, however, are not sinners and sufferers above all seamen. Constrained celibacy and subsequent illicit indulgence of passion, coupled with the lack of appliances for the cure of its consequences on board merchantmen, make large numbers of our seamen ineffective wherever they may be found. A hospital ship here and there will not supply a remedy.

The Mercantile Marine Hospital Service Bill, brought into Parliament last session, provides for compulsory inspection of seamen before they are permitted to sign articles, and for the establishment of seamen's hospitals in London, Gravesend, Hull, Shields, Southampton, Falmouth, Bristol, Cardiff, Swansea, Liverpool, Leith, Dundee, Aberdeen, Dumfries, Glasgow, Dublin, Belfast, Wexford, Londonderry, Galway, and Cork. Foreign sailors,

according to the provisions of the Bill, would be admitted as either in or out patients to these hospitals on their consul, captain, owner, or consignee complying with the regulations as to payment of such sums to the Mercantile Marine Hospital Fund as may from time to time be decided on. This seems rather an illiberal regulation,—'the quality of mercy is not strained,'—more especially supposing, as would very often be the case, the sick foreign seaman to have been in British employ. It is proposed to defray the expenses of the hospitals by levying a tax of *6d.* in the pound per month on the wages of every officer and seaman employed in a British merchant vessel.

The United States Government insists upon inspections, and levies a tax of 40 cents. per month upon every officer and sailor serving afloat in the American mercantile marine. Last year this tax brought in 62,170*l.*, enough not only to provide hospital accommodation and medical and surgical attention for the sailors in want of them, but also to aid in building new hospitals.

Having distanced our American cousins in the

striking way we have done, in the race for mercantile supremacy upon the sea, we ought not to let them distance us in humane consideration for the men to whom that supremacy is due.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ANCHOR DOWN AT LAST.

I HAVE borrowed the title of this chapter from a grateful letter written to a Liverpool newspaper by an old sailor housed in the Royal Alfred Institution at Belvedere-on-Thames.

'I want to tell you,' he writes to the editor, 'that my anchor is down at last, and that I have a good berth—no more fear of collisions, thank God.'

Another old salt was overheard thanking God on his knees, like a little child, for His goodness in getting him into Belvedere; and a superannuated master mariner, in enjoyment of its shelter, said to me, 'I'd rather have my 9*d.* a week here, sir, than the 9*l.* a month I used to make.'

These feelings are prevalent amongst most of the old men quartered in what used to be Sir

Culling Eardley's country seat in Kent, and have been summed up by one of them in lines 'of his own composing,' hung upon the asylum's walls :

> Our anchors are cast, our sails are all furled,
> We have weathered the ocean's deep chiding ;
> And, safe from the buffeting waves of the world,
> Here in Belvedere Haven are riding.

But although the institution which Capt. the Hon. Frederick Maude and the late Mr. Francis Lean, both, be it observed, of the Royal Navy, founded for aged merchant seamen is a very noble one, it is crippled for means to an extent which is disgraceful to a mercantilely maritime community like our own. To the best of its ability it offers its advantages to all British merchant seamen, from whatever port they may hail, and yet a great many ports give it very meagre aid, and others none. Considering the large amount which merchant seamen have contributed by their monthly sixpences to Greenwich Hospital, in whose advantages they were intended to share; bearing in mind, too, the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer takes possession of the unclaimed wages and effects of deceased seamen, a good many people

will be disposed to think that the nation ought to do something as a nation for the worn-out members of its mercantile marine. It is gratifying to find that the cadets of the training ship 'Worcester' contribute very handsomely, and the sucking salts of the 'Chichester' and 'Goliath,' to the best of their ability, towards the support of their superannuated brother, or rather father, tars; but it is not pleasant to call to mind that hundreds of British sailors die in workhouses, and that the Royal Alfred Institution, representing the whole kingdom, should only have been able, since its establishment in 1867, to admit 180 men as inmates, and to put less than as many more upon its out-pension list. How its benefits are longed for may be seen from the circumstance that one poor old fellow died of joy when he found that his candidature for admission had at last been successful.

Certainly, so far as it goes, the Royal Alfred, as I have said before, is a noble institution. The ex-mansion stands in a park, containing some noble trees and a most nautical flagstaff, overlooking the many-sailed reaches of the Thames, winding, now leaden, now golden, between the flat but green and

fertile Kent and Essex marshes. The old boys are allowed to stroll about where they please between meal-times. If they like to work they are supplied with materials at cost price (of course they are expected to help in turns in the house work). A steward—the right man in the right place, who has been all over the world in all kinds of services—a cook, and a nurse are the only paid servants of the establishment. The pensioners have a comfortable reading-room, and a recreation-room, furnished with a bagatelle board, German billiards, draught boards, and dominoes, a great boon to old men whose eyes have grown too dim for print through many a year's peering through murk and mist. The cosy dining-room is decorated with the Royal arms. When its tables gleam with pewter, and the steward lustily thumps the gong, the old salts throng in like swarming bees to their *ad libitum* roast beef, potatoes, and plum pudding, their soup (for which Belvedere is famous), boiled or roast mutton, greens, pea-soup and salt pork, soup and potatoes, and bread and cheese and beer. Every man has a sleeping cabin to himself, some of which have been very snugly, even tastefully, fitted up by

their occupiers. Ex-masters and mates get 9*d.* a week tobacco money, foremast men 6*d.*; in other respects they are perfectly on an equality. A clean towel a week, clean sheets every three weeks, and 'eight pieces a fortnight in the wash' is the laundry allowance for each man. The Belvedere uniform is a blue reefing jacket, vest and trousers, with gilt buttons embossed with a foul anchor and 'Belvedere,' but, except on full dress occasions, those who like can wear their own clothes. Capt. Tribe, the genial, jolly house governor, who is the very man to be at the head of such an establishment, tells me that his subjects give him scarcely any trouble. The most flagrant instance of breach of discipline he can call to mind was this:—The old men can take their choice of places of worship out of doors, and ministers of various denominations visit them at the asylum, but Capt. Tribe has kindly volunteered to be their domestic chaplain. In this capacity he went down to them one winter's day, when the frost was very keen, and found them assembled for prayers, but shivering in sulky silence in a fireless room. They had had a quarrel as to whose turn it was to act as stoker.

'Mr. Petty, the steward, who comes into more *frictional* contact with the men, when questioned about them, says, 'You see, old men can't help being peculiar. If I didn't keep a sharp look-out, some of them would set themselves afire through putting their pipes alight into their pockets. But I've nothing to complain of about them—nothing. There isn't a man in the place who wouldn't do anything for me. You've only to respect their feelings, and I maintain that the feelings of every man in an establishment like this, from the highest to the lowest, ought to be respected.'

One of my pilots over Belvedere was a quiet-spoken Tyneside master mariner, with face and hands like sea-sodden salt-candied oak, who rolled in his blue guernsey as if still walking the deck. When I asked him how he and his mates got on, he answered, with a chuckle, 'Well, sir, you know what sailors are—never satisfied. But we're really as comfortable as men need wish to be.'

The least grateful appraisement I have heard a Belvedere man give of his haven was a most hearty 'Thank God, it's a vast deal better than the workhouse.'

CHAPTER X.

MISSIONS TO SEAMEN.

'THE world is my parish,' said John Wesley, and the sailors' missionary might say the same, even if he never goes outside the London river, since sailors of all nations come to him. The Thames Church Mission's floating church, the 'Swan,' has been returned to Government as rotten, but the devoted old man-of-war's man who commanded her for thirty years, and who has distributed 100,000 copies of the Bible among seamen, still pulls about the river, in all weathers, on all days of the week, scarcely ever getting a rebuff from the craft at which he calls, and often familiarly welcomed with a shout of 'Here's the old man,' 'Here's father.' He tells me that, so far from being scoffed at by the sailors now-a-days, they never use bad language in his presence, and that in this respect

there is a great improvement amongst the coal-heavers, who at one time never suffered him to pass without hearing something blasphemous or obscene.

Mr. Hancock has charge of the centre of the river; there are other missionaries appointed to the Pool, docks, &c. The chaplain, a clergyman of the Church of England, besides holding very miscellaneous services afloat and ashore, does regular duty on board the training-ships 'Arethusa,' 'Chichester,' and 'Cornwall.' There are also six seamen colporteurs.

The object of the society, to which the hon. secretary, Captain Littlehales, R.N., devotes untiring energy, is to hold services on board craft of every class, to sell the Scriptures, &c. to sailors of all nations—indeed to all labourers connected with the river between London Bridge and Gravesend, to distribute tracts amongst them, and to persuade them to attend the mission and free reading-room, which has been opened on the river fringe of Bugsby's Marshes.

The society extends its care to troop-shisp, and to emigrants both ashore and afloat.

The *modus operandi* is very simple; Jack does

not relish formality. On a recent Sunday morning Mr. Hancock took me off from Blackwall in his boat, pulled by two sunburnt, smiling colporteurs, in sailor breeches and blue guernseys. It was very different weather from that in which they often go out. Pleasure-takers were mustering on the Brunswick Pier, waiting for their boats. Emigrants from the neighbouring depôt were basking on it, watching great passenger and merchant steamers going up and down. Sunlight danced upon the water, and made the 'Galloper' lightship, moored off a wharf a little below, blaze like a bank of scarlet geraniums.

'We'll try here,' said my fisher of men, as we neared a tier of small craft, schooners and so on, in just the same tone, as well as words, I have heard a Scotch herring fisher use when ordering the nets to be cast. Accordingly we boarded a Harwich vessel, laden with bones, which, the hatches being off, exhaled not the most exquisite of odours. However, the missionary thinks at first of making it his church.

'Anyone else on board?' he asks of a lad in a dingy striped shirt, who has risen, half-grinning,

from his supine sprawl upon the deck; and to whom the missionary gives a bright-covered little book.

'There's another below.'

'Well, hunt him up.'

But when the second lad makes his appearance, the missionary has decided on holding the service nearer the centre of the tier.

'Ah, our smell was too good for you,' remarks the first youth, with a grin.

'No, it wasn't that—I didn't notice any. Come along, my boy,' answers the cheery missionary.

We scramble across a Danish vessel into a Carnarvon schooner, guttural with Welsh.

'You've no objection?' says the missionary to the master.

'No,' he answers; 'if you've a big Bible to sell —Welsh—you can send it.'

'Come along, lads, come along; I've not much time to spare,' shouts the missionary right and left —or perhaps I ought to write starboard and port— whilst the carved tiller wags to and fro like a dog's tail.

A few sailors tumble over the sides and join the Welshmen. All have bright-covered little tracts given them, one of the colporteurs goes round with

a black bag and lends a little drab-covered hymn-book to each, and the missionary gives out 'Jesu, lover of my soul,' which he and the colporteurs sing most lustily, the congregation joining in more or less fitfully. Then the missionary reads a few verses from Scripture, and delivers a short address, seasoning, whenever he can, his sermonette with salt. Next he uncovers, all stand up and uncover, and he prays. Afterwards he invites his audience to avail themselves of the newspapers, books, and fire ready for them all day long throughout the week at the mission-room, and promises them a 'coach for church,' *i.e.* a boat that will carry them to and fro, if they are willing to attend service in the evening. He shakes hands with all hands. 'Good day, friends,' 'Good day, mates,' say the seamen colporteurs, and we scramble back to our boat, the missionary, as he recrosses the Dane, trying to get into communication with her crew by enquiries of 'Biblie?—biblie?'

Our next visit is paid to a red-painted screw collier, lying alongside a derrick. No rope-ladder hanging over the side, our stroke oar clambers on board and rigs one. The grimy crew—how can they

help being grimy, poor fellows?—are getting their dinners ready. So we wait while they wash their potatoes, and carry their different dishes to the galley. One is a little pie with a potato crust, vandyked at the edge, I fancy, by a thumbnail. During this waiting time we descend into the forecastle, a dim, dirty dungeon with two double tiers of bunks for seamen and firemen respectively, divided by a bulkhead. Cooking preparations having been completed, a coal-dusty plank is propped in the forepart of the vessel for a pew, and service commences. It is very similar to that on board the Welsh schooner, except that none of the collier's crew rise or uncover, and one of them spits copiously. A little dog, moreover, so far as howling goes, joins heartily in the hymn, to the sore trial of the gravity of the colporteur who has started the tune. He is sent to invite the crew of another large screw collier mooring on the other side of the derrick to the evening service, and then we pull to one more vessel, and afterwards we land hard by the mission-room, a light airy chamber, provided with books, papers, a harmonium, and a rostrum, which Mr. F. C. Hill, the proprietor of the chemical works not

far off, opened as a working-man's institute, for his own hands, but, finding that they did not care to avail themselves of it, he transferred it to the Thames Church Mission Society.

The missionary hoists the blue mission-flag on the staff upon the river bank, and then starts for a walk of a mile or more across marsh and market-garden ground to get an hour or two's rest in his home. On our way to East Greenwich he proudly points out and gratefully greets 'the young lady who plays my harmonium,' and tells me that he recently received back from a sailor a book which had been lent him by the society sixteen years before. During that time it had been all over the world and had been read by many a ship's company.

The Rev. Dan. Greatorex, of whose other labours I have spoken, hon. chaplain of the Sailors' Home and Destitute Sailors' Asylum, superintends the religious instruction given in those institutions, exhorts personally or by proxy in the docks, and lends out ships' libraries, accompanied with price-lists, in case sailors should wish to purchase books which have taken their fancy.

The British and Foreign Sailors' Society is very

similar to the Thames Church Missionary Society, but tries—a hard task—to be even less sectarian than the latter. It, too, lends libraries, and one or two of its experiences in this respect are worth noting. An illustrated History of England was pronounced on board ship to be just the thing sailors wanted, and another sailor declared that he had read the 1869 volume of a popular periodical, which combines secular with religious papers very adroitly, from beginning to end. I cannot help thinking that sailors, like other neglected people, whom thoroughly good, but not always adroit, people strive to benefit, would get more good if they were not dosed as they are with religious literature, pure and simple, in the dry sense.

The British and Foreign Sailors' Society has its head-quarters in, for that part of the town, at any rate, the well-built Sailors' Institute, Mercers Street, Shadwell, just off the notorious Highway. It comprises a reading and writing room, a coffee-room furnished with chess and draught boards, an excellent navigation school, a savings' bank, a depôt for the sale of Bibles, &c., and two lecture halls for Bethel services and total abstinence lectures and

meetings. The society has altogether twenty-five home and four foreign stations, at Antwerp, Hamburg, Genoa, and Malta.

Its excellent agents seem to be very simple-minded men, as may be seen from the following extracts from their reports :—

'One day, while visiting ships in the Surrey Dock, I noticed a young sailor who had been following me some distance. I was just in the act of going on board, when I happened to hear him enquiring for the Norwegian church. I told him I would show him the way. I asked him what he was going there for. "I thought," he said, "to find the Norwegian minister, for I am very anxious to find Jesus; I have been praying a long time, but cannot find peace." He was weeping all the time I was talking to him. There was no one in the Norwegian church when we reached it, so I took him to my own house, where he found peace. He was happy; he put his hand in his pocket and offered me half-a-crown, which of course I refused.'

That proffer of the coin certainly seems very much like wanting to pay cab fare to Heaven.

'Much ignorance still prevails both amongst

sailors and navvies. Conversing with a number of sailors, one evening, on the deck of a schooner, and pointing out the evil consequences of sin, one of them acknowledged he was a sinner, but said there were some sins greater than others. For instance, he did not consider swearing to be so bad as stealing a shipmate's duff, which he thought a very great sin indeed. Visiting the cottages one day, I was conversing with a navvy, when he asked me which did I believe—the Old Testament or the New. I said, of course, both. "Then," said he, "if the old is right, what do they want to make a new one for?" I explained to him one was written before the Saviour's birth, and the other after. But he said he did not know much about it. May the Lord enlighten them both!'

'I find they appreciate the gospel much more when it comes with a little sugar for the coffee—an orange for the feverish lips—a message undertaken to the consul—a visit to the ship to see about the old clothes, or bring a clean change—a few francs obtained from the captain, for little extras which make hospital life so much brighter—a letter sent home to anxious friends—a ship sought out to

meet the wishes of one who wants to get to his friends—a good newspaper as well as a religious tract. These little things, almost too small to mention, have made some of them watch for my coming, as they have watched many a time for the morning light.'

The Seamen's Christian Friend Society is another Bethel and temperance association, with views apparently so identical with those of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society, that it seems strange the two do not amalgamate.

The seamen's chapel, hard by the London Docks, is the society's head-quarters. Amongst its supporters it numbers an Artillery major, and a warden from the Tower, the American 'elder' of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Mill Yard, Goodman's Fields, New Connection Methodists, Presbyterians, First Day Baptists, and Congregationalists.

The Wesleyans have a seamen's chapel and institute in the Commercial Road, and a seamen's mission, conducted, like all Methodist undertakings, very energetically. The ministers and missionaries visit, besides vessels, lodging-houses, public-houses,

gin-palaces, and so does the Bible-woman. The former sometimes encounter abuse and horse-play at starting, but almost always succeed in gaining respectful attention eventually. Not unfrequently they meet, both afloat and ashore, with grateful greetings from those who once derided or denounced them. The good Bible-woman is a woman of good nerve. She walks into a room in which between forty and fifty coloured seamen are assembled, talks to them 'like a mother,' and is listened to like one.

There is a touch of humour in the following extract from one of the missionaries' journals :—

'A gentleman from Hackney accompanied me on the river, but after visiting three vessels, and quite spoiling his new trousers, he went home in a cab.'

The Society of Missions to Seamen, of which the Duke of Edinburgh is the patron, and that well-known sailors' friend, Commander Dawson, R.N., the secretary, is a Church of England society, but in its little periodical it makes this frank confession :—

'Nonconformists have been long before the Church of England in their care for sailors, and are even now, in proportion to their numbers and wealth, doing far more than churchmen.'

It is noteworthy that when the president of the Church Congress, recently held at Brighton, announced that the next paper to be read was one on Missions to Seamen, the bulk of the churchmen and women assembled stampeded as if a shell had fallen in their midst, and yet verily missions to seamen, as represented by the society so named, are a topic of which members of the Church of England might well be proud.

A young clergyman in Somersetshire, walking one day upon the seashore, noticed that the sunlight was flashed back from the window of a cottage on a little island in the Bristol Channel. He went to look after the inhabitants of the cottage, and whilst on the island, saw a great fleet of vessels lying at anchor in the Penarth Roads. Finding that the crews of such vessels had no spiritual director, he henceforth devoted himself to their service, and the study of seamanship. He planned decked boats and a sailing church, in which he cruised about in the roughest weather. Losing his private fortune, he was compelled to appeal to the public for pecuniary assistance, and thus the Society of Missions to Seamen originated. Merchant sea-

men, man-of-war's men, boatmen, and fishermen are all included in its care. It has now forty hon. chaplains, thirteen mission clergy, and twenty-five Scripture-readers, beside gratuitous lay helpers, distributed in between thirty and forty seaports, which are provided with mission yachts, boats, floating churches and rooms. The mission craft fly a blue flag emblazoned with the Apocalyptic flying angel. Amongst its multifarious labours, the society is endeavouring to establish a Smack Boys' Home in Great Yarmouth. The youngsters have a very hard life at sea, and are often robbed of their earnings and led into all kinds of wickedness when they come ashore. 'It will be the best thing ever done for them,' said a Yarmouth fisherman when tendering an unasked-for donation to the Home fund. These honest Peggotys are not ungrateful for the attention shown them. The Yarmouth Scripture-reader, when out with the fishing fleet, was taken ill. Seeing that he could not eat the regulation salt junk, one of the fishermen produced a piece of fresh meat that had been given him as a special treat, and made a stew for his teacher. On another occasion, when he was too ill to eat 'hard tack,' two

smacksmen rowed off to a cutter that had just arrived with fresh provisions, and bought him a breakfast of 'soft tommy' and butter.

In 'The Asiatic in London' (Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday) Mr. Joseph Salter, the Strangers' Home missionary, has given an exceedingly interesting account of his labours amongst Lascars, &c. The book tempts one to quote, but it would be scarcely fair to do so. Mr. Salter, although an untravelled man, has made himself more or less familiar with Portuguese and a variety of Eastern tongues; in some he can converse with fluency. Wherever he can get at them, he visits his motley *clientèle*—literally when they are sick and in prison, as well as on board ship; at the Home and in low lodging and public houses. He champions them against those who would oppress or impose upon them, speaks up and interprets for them at police courts, finds them employment, running down as far as Glasgow to look after them, and strives to rescue them from their own vices. A novelist who had Mr. Salter's acquaintance with the Eastern quarter in Bluegate Fields, and could make good use of his materials, might write 'the book of the season.'

CHAPTER XI.

THE THAMES POLICE.

A WATERMAN, the other day, in reply to a complaint against his extortion, said saucily that no one expected a waterman to be honest. There certainly is a good deal of rascality still afloat on and alongshore the Thames, but it is nothing to what it was in the 'good old times,' and for this we are indebted partly to the digging of the docks, and partly to the institution of the Thames Police. When property to the amount of tens of millions lay in the river, open to the observation of a miscellaneous and by no means over scrupulous population, easily accessible, inefficiently, often only nominally guarded, *i.e.* by *quis-custodiet-custodes* watchmen, ready to wink, for a consideration, at robbery, or eager to pounce directly on the spoil, it is no wonder that such property was subjected to

plunder with an audacity so impudent as sometimes to be comical. Almost all the 'long-shore men were in league together; seamen and mates conspired with them to fleece their employers, and revenue officers gave their aid in cheating both owners and Government. It was not mere picking and stealing that went on between the two banks of the Thames in these Alsatian times. Bands of downright river pirates, undeterred by the gibbeted corpses that swayed in the night wind in chains upon the river bank, boarded vessels at night and stripped them with impunity. When a barque was boarded and robbed of her gold in Hobson's Bay at the time of the Australian gold rush, a great sensation was produced, but what was such an exploit as that, in a disorganised young place, in comparison with raids on shipping regularly committed night after night in the port of a city settled for centuries?

We have not quite changed *all* that, but the improvement, as has been intimated, is wonderful—thanks, in large measure, to the Thames Police.

Let us give a glance at the space they have to patrol—the beats they take in boats. Behind us lie

the old trees of Cheyne Walk and the new trees of Battersea Park. The river between them is beyond general Thames police jurisdiction; we start from Chelsea Bridge.

White wager-boats are darting over the water like water insects. A train rumbles across the railway bridge. A black lighter, with one sweep sprawling like a broken fin, flounders past like a wounded whale. Tiers of black lighters are moored alongside pile-faced wharfs, with swinging cranes and 'travellers' propelled along their skeleton tramways over a litter of coal, stone, bricks, chimney-pots and drain-pipes. At Nine Elms there is a muddy labyrinth of rails, crossing and curving like scratches on a greasy metal plate. Horses are straining and stumbling about, dark-coloured trucks rolling hither and thither, and dark-dressed men shouting to one another. Further on we pass on one side the venerable gloom of Lambeth Palace and the somewhat unpleasantly suggestive (barber's-pole-like) red-and-white modernness of St. Thomas's Hospital, and on the other the extinguisher turrets of Millbank Penitentiary, and the sculptures of Westminster Palace, with the skin scaling off

their black-jaundiced noses. The Embankment granite, Waterloo Bridge and Somerset House glisten in the sunlight; the Embankment gardens and the Temple gardens glow like emerald; the grimy coal barges on the Surrey side are gilt, and the straw-laden barges stranded in line upon the hards are turned to gold. The cross upon St. Paul's, the vanes of City churches, the windows of houses dingy as dustmen, are all flashing. Passengers are jostling one another at the ticket pigeon-holes on the thronged steamboat piers. Piermen are shouting 'Outside boat for London Bridge,' 'This way for Battersea,' &c. Boats are 'rushed' before they can get fairly alongside, and off they go, swaying beneath their loads of passengers, and ducking their funnels under the bridges like cut-down hemlock stalks. Under one comes a fussy little steam-tug towing a train of coal barges, and snorting as if very indignant at having such menial work to do, at any rate on a summer's day, when she is passed by a steam launch, flying the blue ensign, under whose white awning lazy folks are laughing and smoking.

Below London Bridge the bustle thickens.

There is a huddle of steamers off London Bridge wharf, watched as if they were all going to start for a race by the people who hang over the parapet. A fleet of lighters is rocking off the Custom-house. The many-floored Shad Thames warehouses rise on the other side like cliffs pierced by mammoth sand-martins. Off Billingsgate in tiers lie plump-sterned, apple-bowed Dutch vessels, that seem to have been varnished with golden syrup—with fish hung in their rigging, and fishy mariners in high boots, short petticoats, jackets and nightcaps, smoking on their decks. The Tower rises grey and black above its green-girt-and-sprinkled yellow brick.

Let us land and have a walk through the London Docks. Greasy-looking waiters on providence are still lounging about the main entrance. I think they must really want to work, for those of their fellows who have succeeded in getting work inside certainly do not seem to be allowed to play at it. They are doing the treadmill inside hollow cylinders, like squirrels' cages, ashore, and straining away with a 'Heave, heave, heave all together' at the ships' winches. Cranes are whipping boxes,

bales and barrels, crates, hogsheads, and bundles of hides and sheepskins out of holds, or hoisting them into high-up warehouse floors. Down into the lighters slide the tea-chests on inclined planks, like schoolboys determined to 'keep the pot boiling.' Casks, as they roll, shed sulphur, which a *very* fanciful mind might liken to primroses that have sprung up in their path. Chief mates in seedy uniforms with white seams and dim gilt buttons, are seated at little tables opposite landsmen clerks, smarter but not half so manly-looking, checking off cargo. Other clerks are account-keeping in wheeled sentry-boxes. Coopers are making casks, and other white-bloused men are unmaking sugar hogsheads with fiercely-wielded axes. Gaugers are hurrying about from barrel to barrel, like proboscis-inserting bees from flower to flower; or, considering the colour of their uniform, perhaps it would be better to liken them to buzzing bluebottles. The bottles they carry, however, are phials of black ink, worn as 'button-holes.' Clerks and others are popping in and out of the Customs offices like rabbits. Dock constables are strolling about like park-rangers. Berth-selecting outward-bound passengers

are blundering about quays, sheds, and vessels like lost sheep. The ship-cleaners, slung on stages, are scraping away with a leisureliness which suggests the thought that if anyone upbraided them with laziness, they would answer—'All in our day's work. If you want to find fault with us, why did you let her get into such a mess?' The grimily perspiring cooks in the bubbling galleys are flushed, but nevertheless they officiate with equal lack of hurry and a more evident sense of being masters of the position. Onions, from the dominant scent of their *cuisine*, would seem to be a very favourite item in a ship's dietary scale when she is in dock. There are other potent odours there—those of tar, turpentine, bilge-water, sugar, vinegar, fat, oil, grease, wool, hides, horns and hoofs, drugs, paint, brandy and snuff. The tobacco breathes from a warehouse covering five acres. You wander past scores upon scores of casks of cognac, and the fungused wine vaults can hold 60,000 pipes—something like a 'well-stocked wine cellar.' The sunlight is reflected after a fashion from the dull green water, on the bows and rudder-posts, but it does not look a very inviting lymph to drop into, in case

a folding bridge should suddenly open beneath one's tread, nor do the hooked drags hung along the walls look very pleasant things to be hooked out with. Cargo, hawsers, gangways, capstans, rings, piles of metal, and so on, make it hard work to get along the quays, but you had better not complain, or you will logically be asked 'What *business* have *you* here?'

Crammed warehouses, worth a king's ransom, rise on the right hand and the left. A forest of masts springs from the basins, foliaged with loose canvas and drying duck, and flowered with bunting —red, white, blue, green, black and yellow.

White streaks, blue streaks, green streaks, yellow streaks, black hulls with no streaks, black hulls with a magpie line of ports, green hulls with gilt stars and suns upon their cat-heads, bluff bows, razor bows, square sterns, round sterns, wedge sterns, high ships, low ships, wooden ships, iron ships, squared yards, peaked yards, spars like masts, spars like large walking-sticks, rusty iron, belaying pins polished like burnished gold, fresh-painted ships, blistered ships, ships with rigging just set up, and limp grey shrouds with old oars lashed across

them, canvas like clean new sheets and canvas like tattered old dusters; decks like fresh washed white china plates, and decks like devilled bones—ships of all kinds coming from all parts of the world, about to scatter, as their gaily printed board-bills show, to all parts of the world, may be seen in *the* London Docks, and almost all the London docks.

Let us go back to the river, and run down by the flag-staffed riverside churches, the white-powdered mills, on the topmost floors of which the white-powdered men as they lean over to watch the dangling sacks are dwarfed to dolls; the tumble-down wooden tenements, whose projecting rooms make one think of clusters of funguses; the long, low, tarred block and mast houses, the slimy stairs and causeways at the foot of cramped, dark alleys; the wherries lounging on their sides, dozing, so to speak, upon their faces, or jostling one another with converging beaks like poultry clustered to be fed; the pebbly hards covered with little mudlarks rolling up their trousers to their hips; the other little boys who may perhaps be cooling, but can scarcely be cleaning, themselves in the coffee-coloured water in which they splash naked; the shipbreakers' yards

piled with sea-scented timber and green battered copper; the boatbuilders' yards, in which there lie white drifts of chips and shavings; the shipwrights' yards, in which sailing vessels are crammed into muddy-gated docks from which it seems impossible that they will ever get out again, or iron monsters are being fashioned into such form as they will be ever able to boast beneath a locust-like clatter of rivetters; past acres of docked shipping whose house-flags flutter afar off over lofty roofs; past malodorous works of all kinds, some with conical kilns like Titan's sugar-loaves done up in brown paper and some with chimney-stalks like Californian pines, and past the wooded hill of Greenwich sloping down to the noble college.

The variety of steamers is now one of the most striking features of the jumble of craft through which the Thames police galleys are ever vigilantly gliding: steamers of almost every flag, single and in tiers, alongside wharfs, beneath the cranes of warehouses flush with the river, unloading at derricks, down by the head as if they meant to dive, down by the stern as if they were about to leap into the air like flying fish; with lists to port and

with lists to starboard; with pie-crust coloured funnels, with red funnels, with black funnels, with white funnels, with piebald funnels; with bows like razors and with bows like bow-windows; red and black screw colliers with metallic cordage, scarce a bit of wood or hemp about them; towering passenger steamers with white deck-houses and hurricane decks hung round with lettered life-buoys like huge wreaths of *immortelles*, and boat and lighter-surrounded merchant steamers with decks lumbered with straw and sundries, a chaos of crates and casks, cat's-cradle cordage, crew, porters, barking dogs and red-faced gesticulating mates.

Here floats a huge dredging machine, looking like an antediluvian monster of the deep come up to blow. Past it, steered by a young fellow in a blue yachting suit, glides a canoe beneath a spread of cotton 'canvas' as white as swan's down. Dingy battered dredgermen's boats, with their fluked implements peeping over the side, and beer-selling boats are plying about. The timber rafts rock in the wash of the crowded river-boats, going up and down like shuttles, their fiddlers discoursing somewhat twangy melody from instruments cuddled

like babies, or going round with their saucers as if they were pressing the company to partake of pickled whelks. Tan-sailed, red and blue and green streaked barges, laden almost to the cross-trees, with tarpaulin-covered hay and straw, and perking up their bowsprits like rhinoceroses' horns; shabby-looking brigs and barques and ships with stains like rust on their black and white streaks, and rigging all higgledy-piggledy, are anchored broadside of one another and stem to stern. In some, grimy men, with inflamed eyes, and cowled in sacks, swinging on ropes, appear and disappear with a suspicious resemblance to demons of the pit, whilst a black avalanche of coal rattles into the lighter alongside. A barque, high out of the water, is being towed down from the London Docks to the East India to load; and, curiously eyed by the emigrants lounging upon Brunswick Pier, up the river, low in the water, comes a long, heavy-sparred ship from Australia, with peaked yards and a tug on each side.

Such are the beats of the Thames Police. They have three stations, at Waterloo Pier and Wapping, and the hulk 'Royalist,' formerly moored above bridge, but now removed to Follywall, Poplar.

The force consists of a superintendent, some 30 inspectors, three or four detectives, and about 120 constables—a small number in proportion to the work they have to do. The detectives have been found very useful, since they are well acquainted with the regular river thieves and their accomplices. Larcenies, chiefly committed either directly or indirectly by lightermen in charge of goods, may have somewhat increased of late, but at the same time a greater proportion of the property has been recovered and more convictions have been secured. At one time sheep were stolen wholesale from the marshes during the winter, but a police boat cruising under sail between Erith and Woolwich has put a stop to these depredations. The Thames Police prevent the river steamers from being dangerously overcrowded; they attend fires on the river and waterside, assisting the firemen in moving the floating engines and keeping back bad characters. They try, but not always with success, to make steamers consume their own smoke. They often prevent suicide and save life in other ways. One autumn midnight the crew of a police boat noticed a barge so sunk in the mud, off Wapping, that the water was flowing over her deck. They boarded

her and roused from their sleep in the cabin two men, a woman, and two children. To save the last child a constable had to wade waist-deep. Some of their duties are trying to the nerves, especially if the find should take place by night, when only dim lights shine upon the river, and the great city spreading on both banks is a black blot, flecked with more such lights, and murmuring, as it were, in its sleep. I refer to the dead bodies they find in the river, often in a state of decomposition. These they have to convey to dead-houses, which are a downright disgrace to such a city as London, almost void of light and ventilation, and so small that corpses have to be brought out for identification. When putrefaction has not set in they are photographed, and the portraits sent from division to division. The different portions of the body of the woman who was so barbarously murdered and cut in pieces, it was supposed, by a bargeman, some time ago, were collected between Battersea and Woolwich, put together under the direction of the police medical officers, and then a photograph was taken of the poor creature; but although enquiries were made all over the country, the dastardly murderer is still undiscovered.

The Thames Police are also now employed in boarding homeward-bound vessels for the purpose of ejecting crimps and touters, and outward-bound vessels to see that there is no breach of the law when substitutes are engaged. In both respects they have been of great service. In the first month of the present year they had only twice to exert their authority actively on board outward-bound vessels, and in every case but one, in which the man obtained permission from the officers to remain on board, they scared crimps off from homeward-bound vessels. These brief remarks in the official report are suggestive :—'Several runners were at the docks as the ship passed in, but made no attempt to get on board.' 'Several boarding-house keepers and tailors were afloat, but made no attempt to get on board.' 'Several crimps were in boats in Limehouse Reach ; on seeing the police they made no attempt to get on board.' 'Boarding-house masters were hovering about the ship ; but made no attempt to get on board.' 'Three crimps were towing alongside the ship. I was informed by the captain that they had towed from Greenhithe ; on seeing the police they left the vessel.'

CHAPTER XII.

DISCIPLINE.

THE fair way is to give both sides of a question. Some people say that shipping offices are great benefits, others say they are nothing of the kind. Mr. George Smith, shipowner, of Glasgow, in his evidence before the Royal Commission, stated concisely and temperately the objections to them. He said that his firm before 1854 used to employ shipping masters, who took care to supply them with good crews, to see them on board punctually, and in case that, by any chance, one or two—as the best sailors will at times—played truant, to have willing substitutes alongside to take their place. Whilst that system lasted, said Mr. Smith, they never had a ship delayed an hour, and never put a man in prison. But now, with the best intentions, the Board of Trade has taken the duty of manning ships in hand, and does not do it.

'The charge which the Board of Trade makes to us for doing it is nearly the same as we paid formerly to those shipping masters; but the shipping master, at the same time that he got his two shillings and sixpence, got us the seamen.' Since the change, complains Mr. Smith, his firm have been compelled, in self-defence, to adopt the distasteful course of putting men in prison, and scarcely a single vessel has gone away with the crew as engaged. 'We had 114 in ten months who had engaged to join, and had not joined.' Between 800 and 900 men engaged by the same firm were defaulters in three years.

The advocates of mercantile marine offices state, on the other hand, that they enable men to understand the agreements they sign before signing them; assist masters to make the agreements fair on both sides; stamp them with an official character; employ messengers to assist in getting men—who are always sober when they sign articles, and have full opportunity of visiting the vessel they have signed for, if, a very rare case, they choose to avail themselves of it—on board when the ship goes out; officially witness discharge and payment, and

by means of friendly advice on both sides prevent disputes at the pay-table ; enable men to bank their money or send it to their friends without stirring out of the building, thus rescuing tens of thousands of pounds from the hands of Jack's despoilers; and possess greater facilities than could otherwise be secured for examining the accounts and receiving the wages and effects of deceased seamen.

There seems to be a good deal of evil in connection with the discharge of men abroad. They spend their money, or get robbed of it, and then are sent home not only at the public expense, but also, owing to the insufficiency of the money paid for passage and keep, at that of shipowners who are not responsible for leaving discharged men at foreign ports. As one of the aggrieved owners very justly remarks, 'to be a deserter, or quarrelsome, or even an invalid, does not set up for a man a claim to the best, quickest, and costliest, class conveyance home.'

It certainly would be well if, when a British seaman is paid off abroad, the consul or shipping master should be empowered to retain enough of his wages to pay his passage home in case of his

becoming distressed ; and perhaps it might prevent discharges on insufficient grounds if, for every man discharged abroad, a master were compelled to ship one of the same rating. If it be true that some men are driven to desert abroad for economy's sake, good care ought certainly to be taken that the owners of the ships from which they run should have to pay their passage home. When a ship is sold abroad, and the men consequently are discharged, the owner is legally bound to find them employment on board another homeward-bound vessel, or to pay their passage home (including keep).

This chapter can scarcely be made otherwise than dry, but it is short, and the topics it treats of are most important.

Where dismissal from the service would be looked upon as a punishment, discipline on board ship can, of course, be easily maintained, and in some other cases officers who combine force of character with a good heart have no difficulty in managing their men ; but in many ships there is nothing that can really be called discipline—the system consists of an alternation of wheedle and bully.

It would be an admirable thing if a good workable code of discipline could be devised for the merchant service—good for both officers and men. Slighter punishments for breach of discipline would be more effective than those at present in vogue if, with due regard to the liberty of the subject, they could be inflicted at once and without the cumbrous machinery of a prospective—possibly only prospective—trial on shore.

CHAPTER XIII.

FINANCE.

WHAT an Advance Note is will be best shown by giving its blank form :—

ADVANCE NOTE.

£ London, 187

Three days after the Ship leaves

pay to the order of

provided he sails in the said Ship, and is duly earning his wages according to his agreement, the sum of pounds, shillings, being months' advance of wages.

To Master.

payable at

The seaman must write his name on the back hereof; by this act he will understand he is con-

veying to another the value of this note. If he cannot write, his mark must be attested by a witness not the discounter or recipient.

N.B.—The seaman must join the ship at the time appointed, or a substitute will be engaged.

Ship lying in Time to join

Anyone who has visited a dock district must have seen an announcement of 'Advance Notes Cashed' very frequently recurring. It is because crimps fatten on them that some of Jack's friends would get rid of them altogether, urging shipowners, instead of granting them, to supply their vessels with slop-chests furnished with articles both cheap and good.

The necessity for them has originated in this way. The sailor comes home, is paid off, and according to the old ballad—

> Feasts on dainties, drinks of the best,
> Thinks that with friends he is happily blest;
> For punch, beer, and brandy, they night and day call,
> And he is honest Johnny, Johnny, pay for all, all, all.
> He scarce in a month knows the night from the day—
> While his gold and silver last, who but he, he, he?
> But of money he soon consumes his store,
> And his hostess soon informs him that she will not score, score, score.

She frowns like a fury, and kind Kate grows coy;
A kiss or a smile he must no more enjoy;
Nay if he only calls for a simple jug of beer,
His hostess suddenly cannot hear, hear, hear.

His holiday is over, he must find another ship, and to supply him with an outfit for his new voyage, perhaps to enable him to pay off part of his score, he gets his employers to make him the conditional advance that has been indicated—that is to give him an advance note, which he cashes, no doubt often docked by a very considerable discount. Owners have no objection to make these advances. They say that if they did not, it would often be impossible for Jack to obtain credit on shore, since a boarding-house keeper has no legal power to detain a sailor's kit for debt; if an insolvent sailor has signed articles, a magistrate can compel the boarding-house keeper to whom he is in debt to give up his chest or bag. Of course, as a rule, there is no great hardship in this, Jack's Bonifaces and Dame Quicklys not being differentiated from other hosts and hostesses by any peculiar fleeceability. Besides, a man may need an advance from no misconduct, but simple misfortune, and a shipowner can generally make it safely, although of course it

is possible that a ship, after having passed, say the Downs, might have to put back into port, where a man, whose advance note had been honoured, might desert or refuse to work.

It has been proposed by those who would legalise, instead of abolishing, advance notes that they should be recognised in a court of law if on forms sanctioned by the Board of Trade, bearing on the back a provision that the amount shall be paid in cash only, less 5 per cent. commission, to the seaman, under penalty of a fine of 10*l.*, half to go to the informer; together with a scale of 5 per cent. commissions on sums of from 1*l.* to 5*l.*; the sailor to sign his name, attested by one witness, opposite a printed statement that he has received so much in cash from the casher; no money paid on an improperly drawn advance note to be recoverable at law, and no advance note to be payable at less than seven days after sight. It is said that crimps would look at such advance notes very much as monkeys eye hot chestnuts.

As to the rate of Jack's wages, that, as I have intimated, will find its own level, like the water on which Jack sails. The worth of anything is just as

much as it will bring. Its danger and disagreeableness being taken into consideration, Jack certainly does not seem overpaid for his work, but still, if his pay, *plus* keep, be compared with the circumstances of some other classes of hard-working men, he certainly is better remunerated than some of his advocates are willing to admit; and, after all, I must repeat, this is a question which must settle itself. Jack is no galley-slave bound to the oar. If he does not like his wages, he can leave them (as he often does) and find remuneration more to his taste on shore. When shipowners find that they cannot man their ships at their present rate of pay, they will raise it as they have done before. Sailors have peculiar facilities for transporting their labour from a market in which it is cheap to a market in which it is dear, especially since a great many of them have no local ties. Witness the English, Scotch, Irish, and, indeed, American shilling-a-month-and-tobacco men who worked their way out to the Australian diggings, and the high pay of the Australian coasting trade at the time of the gold rush.

But, good or bad, the sailor's wages are often

squandered instead of ministering to the comfort of the sailor when he is worn out, or the support of his family when he is dead.

The suggestion, therefore, that a pension fund and life insurance, specially adapted for sailors, should be established seems an excellent one. The Naval Reserve men have Government pensions provided for them of 12*l.* per annum, to which they are entitled on reaching the age of sixty, or sooner, if they have become unfit for service at sea. If they choose to take a smaller pension than 12*l.* they can hand it on to their widows. In the navy, men can receive pensions when not more than thirty-nine years of age. In the merchant service, it is said, sailors become prematurely old before they are forty. Of some 2,400 British seamen who died abroad in one year, only 143 were over forty years of age, and only 34 over fifty. The deaths in her Majesty's ships average fifteen per thousand, in the merchant service twenty-four per thousand, and besides these ascertained deaths on shipboard, many sailors of course die on shore, both at home and abroad. It is noteworthy that when the yellow fever recently raged at St. Thomas, British crews

were the greatest sufferers. In reference to the pension fund, it is proposed that if a sailor, after purchasing an annuity at a rate specially adapted to his calling, should cease to 'follow the sea' before he is thirty-five years of age, he should, if still able-bodied, only receive the annuity he would be entitled to according to the Post-Office tables; that he should be enabled to pay, if he pleases, in a lump sum; and to transfer money paid for life insurance to the pension fund, and money paid to the pension fund to life insurance, according to the circumstances of himself and his connections; the pension to begin at forty, and to be increased in proportion to the number of years the pensioner defers taking it. Those who know sailors say that a good many of them, though likely enough to neglect the duty if left to themselves, would be glad to be forced to insure both their lives and their effects; but compulsion in such a case would seem to be treating Jack rather too much like a baby. He is by no means the only man who neglects his duty in the matter of life insurance.

It is proposed to found a benefit fund for the widows and orphans of subscribers to the pension

fund and life insurance, to the principal of which, it has been suggested, Government might contribute a certain proportion of the sums which have accrued and still accrue to it from the unclaimed wages and effects of deceased seamen; to which, after indemnifying the shipowner, might be added the pay and effects of deserters—the interest not needed for the benefit fund to be made use of as bonuses for the life policies. In Scotland and the North of England sailors have established benefit societies, but attempts to start them in the South have failed, partly because the men were reluctant to subscribe to any society which was not guaranteed by Government, and partly because the ruthless parasites who prey on Jack of course did everything in their power to prevent even a single penny of his pay from being diverted from their greedy grasp.

The question of monthly notes is of importance to ratepayers as well as seamen's families. A sailor's wife may come upon the parish with her children, whilst all the time a shipowner may hold a sum of money which the man has really earned, and which he would gladly have allotted for the

support of those belonging to him. Complaints are made also that, when allotment notes have been granted, their payment is sometimes stopped without just cause. Captains of vessels write to their owners, requesting them to stop the payment of notes without giving any reason. An Irish shipowner, who had granted an allotment note in favour of a sailor's wife, resident in Scotland, coolly informed her that she could have her money if she would come to Cork for it. It has, therefore, been proposed that the parish authorities should be empowered to demand of a shipowner a certain proportion of a sailor's wages, when his wife has applied for relief, 'provided the shipowner fails to show that a monthly note has been granted, or that the money due to the seaman amounts to less than one month's wages, or if voyaging to the Pacific or Indian Oceans, to less than two months',' the parish undertaking to reimburse the owner, should he be found to have paid on behalf of the family more than the sailor had earned. It is also recommended that the managers of Sailors' Homes, taking on themselves the risk of repayment, and therefore

bound to caution, should cash, at a fair discount, both advance and allotment notes, or 'the shipping masters might endorse the monthly notes of men 'with high characters who could not otherwise obtain them from the shipowner, stopping from their pay a certain percentage to cover risks.' To finish with finance, it certainly seems hard that, when the voyage is over, the sailor should have to hang about waiting for his pay, the interest on a good part of which the owner has enjoyed for some months. It is this waiting time that hands Jack over to the tender mercies of the crimp. An experienced marine superintendent makes this suggestion:—'In my opinion it would be most reasonable and just, in the interest alike of owner and crew, that services, pay, and provisions should continue until payment of wages, or at least the eve of the morning of pay, and if not paid before noon, that day's pay to be added. Such an alteration of the law would insure as speedy a settlement of wages as the master could effect; and any crimp or other person harbouring or encouraging seamen to leave their ship until duly discharged,

should not be able to recover any debts incurred by such seamen ; in short, I would not allow any debt incurred by seamen previous to discharge to be recoverable by law.'

CHAPTER XIV.

SANITAS SANITATUM.

MR. DISRAELI'S parody on the hackneyed saying of the Ecclesiast is well known, and, within limits, it is indisputable. Although *omnia* may be *vanitas*, *sanitas* is not quite *omnia*; still it is a very great deal. Again, it has been said that as we eat, we think. With still more force may it be said that as we eat and drink, we enjoy health and strength, or suffer from their opposites; and since a sickly, feeble sailor on board ship is worse than negatively useless—is positively perilous in a more marked way than the majority of invalided landsmen can be to those with and under whom they serve—Jack's diet does not merely affect his own digestion, but becomes a matter of very general importance.

Some exaggeration has been indulged in on

this subject. Certain persons seem to have got the notion that all sailors when at sea are fed on meat which might be taken for half-rotten mahogany, steeped in brine, and on biscuits that walk away in weevils from the knuckle that has shattered them, washed down by bilge-water flavoured with bad rum. The fact is that there is great diversity in the provisioning of ships. The Marine Boards suggest scales, but these are not compulsory. Owners and men are free to make their own bargain on this head, and the consequence is that some ships are provisioned more and some less liberally than the boards require. It would, perhaps, be unwise for Government to stipulate precisely how a ship should be victualled, since, as some one has acutely said, 'in such a case the minimum of efficiency becomes the maximum of legal necessity,' but the less liberal victualling has brought a great disgrace upon our mercantile marine.

Readers of old nautical novels and accounts of maritime discovery must remember how frightfully the Royal Navy used to be scourged by scurvy—a disease which, if not carried on board, would scarcely ever be found in any clean, tight, properly

provisioned vessel. It is now unknown in the Navy, but it is more common in the British than in any other merchant service. Our first-class merchant ships are free from it; it scarcely ever occurs in the French or Dutch service; and in the American is far rarer than in ours. The Dutchman is well provided with pickles; on board the Frenchman a variety of vegetables is served out every day, and light wine, one glassful of which daily, if good, is said to be as efficacious as, and not more expensive than, the ordinary allowance of good limejuice. Some of the limejuice supplied to British ships is anti-scorbutic only in name, and, even when good, being served out in weekly allowances, it is often drunk off at once or thrown away. Mr. Grinnell, of New Bedford, U.S., states that the following precautions against scurvy are taken on board whalers hailing from that port:—They are supplied with plenty of fresh potatoes packed in seasoned new oil-casks, or preserved in molasses, with sliced and dried potatoes packed in boxes, and with other potatoes and quartered cabbages pickled in cider vinegar. They are also supplied with onions and dried apples, and oranges and other fresh fruits are given to the men

whenever they can be got. A little limejuice is occasionally served out.

Bad provisions, mainly consisting of salt meat, are one of the greatest causes of scurvy. Even when the British seaman's provisions are liberal in quantity and good in quality, there is often too much sameness in the diet table. Preserved meat should sometimes take the place of salted ; the salt of the junk should be neutralised by preserved vegetables, pickles, treacle, dried herbs ; dried fruit might be added with advantage to the ordinary dietary scale. Fresh vegetables should be obtained whenever possible. An occasional issue of beer, cider or light wine, and a daily dinner ration of lemonade, says Dr. Walter Dickson, would be of great benefit to the men's health. In former days ships doubling the Cape of Good Hope used to touch at Cape Town for fresh provisions ; now they have generally ceased merely to call, and the fear of incurring tonnage duties prevents captains from sending a boat ashore at St. Helena to purchase fruit and vegetables, and to get watercress—to be had there almost for the asking. In one year, out of 102 cases of scurvy treated at the

Dreadnought Hospital, 101 were British. Mere selfishness, say the sailors' friends, might make British shipowners (unless fully insured) more anxious to provide their men with anti-scorbutics, for what chance would a ship have with a crew, half of whom, say, were disabled by scurvy? As long as the sick men possibly could work, of course they would be kept up to their work by the other sailors—jolly Jack has a somewhat cruel lack of faith in a shipmate's illness, if it lays any additional work on his own shoulders—but weakness, sooner or later, must give in. Scurvy ere this may have sent ships drifting with the dead to shores where all was dumb.

Bread, beef, pork, flour, peas, tea, coffee, sugar, water, and sometimes rice, and more rarely raisins, suet, and mustard, with equivalent substitutes, such as molasses for sugar, and butter in lieu of a certain proportion of beef, at the master's option, and vinegar, sugar, and limejuice according to Act of Parliament, are the forecastle *cartes* of London, Liverpool, Sunderland, Glasgow and Aberdeen ships trading to the East Indies, Australia, Mauritius, and America. British sailors, I believe, do not,

as a rule, complain of the total amount of their rations; but, it is said, they have to take their chance as to quality. 'I have seen,' said Captain Bedford Pim to the Society of Arts, 'pork into the fat of which I could drive my thumb up to the hilt.' Moreover, their food is often atrociously cooked.

Man-of-war Jack gets (all of guaranteed good quality) biscuit or soft bread, spirits, sugar, chocolate, tea, oatmeal, mustard, pepper, vinegar, fresh meat, vegetables, salt pork, split peas, salt beef, flour, suet, currants or raisins, preserved meat, preserved potatoes, and rice. His food is well cooked, and he eats it off a comfortable mess-table instead of hugger-mugger in a comfortless forecastle as he crouches on his chest with his plate upon his knees. In addition, all her Majesty's seagoing ships are provided with, as medical comforts, essence of beef, wine, preserved meat or concentrated or common soup, and preserved potatoes or rice; and those on the East Indies, China, Australia, Cape of Good Hope, Coast of Africa, West Indies, Mediterranean, Pacific, and South-east Coast of America stations, with calves'-foot jelly, preserved milk, and preserved

fowl. Our seagoing troops and adult male third-class passengers are supplied with salt beef, flour, suet, raisins, salt pork, split peas, preserved meat, compressed mixed vegetables, biscuits, fresh bread, rice, porter, preserved potatoes, sugar, tea, vinegar, mustard, pickles, pepper and salt; and with the following medical comforts: brandy, rum, port wine, preserved meat, prepared soup, essence of beef, sago, arrowroot, rice, preserved milk, lime-juice, sugar, refined and unrefined, for the limejuice, best black tea, vinegar, soap, pearl barley, preserved potatoes, compressed mixed vegetables, pickles, carbolic acid, Condy's fluid, and bottled ale or porter. In addition, or rather in place of the salt and preserved, they have fresh meat and vegetables whenever such agreeable variations of sea-diet can be procured.

Verily, mercantile Jack does not fare sumptuously in comparison. His medical comforts, if on board a foreign-going ship, consist of castor oil, Epsom salts, calomel, powder of jalap, rhubarb, cream of tartar, sulphur, alum, powdered ginger, sulphate of quinine, balsam of copaiba, carbonate of magnesia, olive oil, spirit of turpentine, lauda-

num, bicarbonate of soda, tartaric acid, Goulard's extract, compound chalk powder, Dover's powder, essence of peppermint, purging pills and powders, opium pills, emetic powder, blue pills, sudorific powders, simple, mercurial, and basilicon ointments, blistering and adhesive powders, solution of chloride of zinc, tincture of rhubarb, opodeldoc, paregoric, spirit of nitric ether, acetate of lead, croton oil, camphor, tartar emetic, iodide of potassium, ergot of rye, tincture of digitalis, ipecacuanha, sulphate of zinc, lunar caustic, muriate of morphia, aloes, aromatic confection, prepared chalk, arrow-root, pearl barley, rice, lint, sponges, scales and weights, graduated drop-measures, scissors, syringes, lancets, bandages, calico, flannel, needles, pins, and thread, splints, trusses, pestles and mortars, funnels, spatulas, &c. The three classes of persons with whom I have compared him are, at least, as well off as mercantile Jack for medical and surgical appliances; the man-of-war's man and troops are far better off for appliers of the same, and if the surgeons who look after the third-class passengers are not all quite as qualified and experienced as the shipping advertisements make out, at any rate they

are better medical attendants than rough skippers, and few of our trading ships which do not carry passengers carry a doctor—indeed, I am not aware that any do, except whalers. And what are Jack's medical comforts proper? Arrowroot, pearl barley, and rice.

The following is the scale of rations for long voyages recommended by the Society for Improving the Condition of Merchant Seamen. Weekly:—7 lbs. of bread, 5 lbs. of beef, 3¾ lbs. of pork, 2 lbs. of flour, 1 pint of peas, ⅞ oz. of tea, 3½ ozs. of coffee or cocoa, 14 ozs. of sugar, 21 quarts of water (an extra pint daily in the tropics), 4 ozs. of suet, 8 ozs. of raisins, 8 ozs. of preserved potatoes, with two extra pints of water for cooking them; 1 lb. of preserved meat, 1 pint of pickles, 1 oz. of mustard, and 1 pint per lamp of oil or equivalent candles. Half an ounce of coffee or cocoa and half an ounce of sugar at daylight to all hands in port and the watch on deck at sea. Double the Parliamentary ½ oz. allowances of limejuice and sugar. No grog, except as an extra, maximum half-gill of rum daily at sea; one gill in port. In the list of substitutes 4 ozs. of preserved potatoes, 3 ozs. of compressed vegetables,

8 ozs. of preserved vegetables, and 8 ozs. of common potatoes, kept in vinegar or molasses, are reckoned equivalent, and 4 ozs. of apples or other dried fruit as equal to 2 ozs. of raisins. One pound and a half is the fresh meat ration, with potatoes and yams instead of flour and peas, and green vegetables for soup. In port it is recommended that the men should be supplied not only with fresh potatoes and onions, watercress and radishes, but also with oranges and lemons, limes, shaddocks, &c. This important suggestion, moreover, is made—that when the allowance of meat shrinks in cooking below half its original weight, an extra half-ration should be issued. The salt meat used in the Royal Navy shrinks far less than the average of that with which trading vessels are victualled, and hence a nominally smaller ration of the former goes as far as the nominally larger allowance of the merchant service. To pass from beef to bread, biscuit should be stored in air-tight tanks; water also would longer preserve its sweetness if kept in iron tanks instead of casks, and on board every large vessel there ought to be a distilling apparatus.

It may be interesting to compare with the fare

of British that of French merchant seamen, who are on a par in this respect with the sailors of the French navy. Biscuit, fresh bread, brandy, rum or tafia, wine, coffee, sugar, preserved beef or salt pork, dried peas, small beans, broad beans, potatoes, Julienne mixture, consisting of desiccated vegetables, cheese, dried vegetables, rice, sourkrout, preserved sorrel, butter, olive oil, mustard, pepper or pimento, salt, vinegar, and lemonjuice.

Of course it is possible that plenty of everything may be provided, and yet there may not be enough, owing to the badness of the quality. Strict inspection and sharp penalties would be the remedies for this. Again, limejuice, as well as bread and water, may be deteriorated by the way in which it is stored. If owing to an insufficient supply of limejuice or vegetables, a sailor who comes on board ship sound contracts scurvy, it would really seem to be only fair that the owners should pay him until he is cured ; but, on the other hand, if a sailor, after having had limejuice served out to him, declines or neglects to drink it (not a very uncommon case, I believe) and then takes scurvy, he ought not only to have no remedy

against the owners, but should be mulcted of his wages in proportion to the time during which, owing to his own foolish obstinacy, he may have been an idle mouth, hindering and adding to the toil of the rest of the crew. It certainly would be an excellent thing, and a thing which owners and shipmates would have a right to demand, if every sailor before joining a foreign-going ship were required to pass a medical examination, but it may be doubted whether it would be practicable to extend, as some have suggested, the operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts to 'the waterside parishes of the chief mercantile ports.' Though middle-aged angels have rushed in where rough men have feared to tread, that Act is a loathsome subject to enter on. I will, therefore, content myself with pointing out that soldiers and men-of-war's men are paid by the nation, but merchant sailors by private persons. If elementary hygiene, medicine and surgery were to form, according to Miss Florence Nightingale's suggestion, subjects in the examination of masters and mates, a little manual embracing these matters being compiled for their special use, good would, no doubt, be done eventually; but that 'eventu-

ally,' I fear, will not fall within the lives of the present generation of sailors.

The way in which sailors are housed at sea varies like the way in which they are fed. Bad, as a rule, is the best, although deck-houses certainly look most comfortable, and, if kept decently, smell sweetest. Some forecastles are damp, dark, dirty, foul-scented dungeons. The hold breathes its malodours into them through a ventilating hatch, or the bulkhead is removed bodily, the hold and forecastle are amalgamated, and crew and cargo share and share alike, or rather very unequally. In a passenger—not an emigrant—ship I have known men, women and children, cats, dogs, parrots, cockatoos, chain cable, and wool bales thus jumbled in the 'tween decks. Or cargo and cordage are stowed away in the forecastle, and, the cables working through it uncovered, in addition to other discomforts, the water cascades through the hawse-pipes. The space required for each member of the crew of a foreign-going ship by Parliament, twelve superficial feet of room and seventy-two cubic feet of air, is pretty generally given in forecastles; but it is often ill-arranged, and, as has been intimated, sadly

infringed upon. It has been suggested that if exemption from tonnage dues could be claimed for all spaces set apart for crews, if passed by a Government inspector as dry and well lighted and ventilated, on condition that cargo should never be carried in these spaces, shipowners would provide better accommodation for their men. Those who house their men best now very likely would observe the condition and do so; but it is at least quite as probable that those who crowd their men now would disregard the condition, by hook or by crook, and crowd them worse than ever, One more thing remains to be mentioned, the lack of provision for decency made for the men before the mast. Jack thinks little of such a state of things; he is used to it; he is simply doing as our rough tarpaulins did hundreds of years ago; but it disgusts a land-lubber. A sailor would be every bit as good a sailor, and certainly, through gaining self-respect, he would be likely to turn out a better man, if he were not expected to do everything like a monkey.

CHAPTER XV.

TRAINING-SHIPS.

ON May 25 Exeter Hall, owing to the exertions of the indefatigable Mr. W. Williams, was crowded to see a pretty sight—700 youngsters from the National Refuges for Homeless and Destitute Children, including the sailor boys from the 'Chichester' and 'Arethusa,' sloped up from the platform almost to the ceiling, in artistic chromatic arrangement, like banks of hothouse flowers. The Prince of Wales's two little boys, who were present in sailor costume in honour of the occasion, could scarcely ever have seen a prettier sight than when the variegated throng waved in harmony their flashing flags; and it was spirit-stirring to hear the young tars cheer and sing 'The Union Jack of Old England,' and the 'Right little, tight little island;' when, too, they swung out into the Strand with their light sailors' tread, it

was pleasant to hear the whilom waifs of the street bandying jokes with the police—no longer dreaded 'slops.' The lads gain on an average fourteen pounds in weight during their stay on board the ships. In seven years the 'Chichester' sent 130 boys into the Royal Navy, and 1,065 into the merchant service, and now that she has the 'Arethusa' for her consort at Greenhithe, the feeding of both services by this valuable agency will, of course, be still more considerable. As a rule, the 'Chichesters' have done well at sea, the large majority having been reported as 'very good,' both in activity and conduct. During their training they are taught, besides simple school work, cooking and baking, brushmaking and shoemaking, tailoring and carpentering, and the following is their seamanship programme—compass and lead, knotting, splicing, and sailmaking, signalling, model, reefing and furling, rowing and steering, and swimming. Here is a specimen of the kind of boy saved from misery and made a man of by these ships. A dirty but smart little fellow applied for admission, stating that his father was just dead, and that his mother had died when he was a boy. His only nurse had been an

Indian who used to perform with the score of monkeys and pair of Lilliputian ponies, with which his father went about the world, sometimes as far as to Australia. The showman being dead, his elder son had sold his property, squandered the proceeds, and left the little fellow to starve.

But higher up the river, off Charlton, lies the ship, the fine frigate 'Warspite,' which represents the earliest effort made to train poor lads for the sea. The Marine Society was established for this purpose more than a hundred years ago. Its first ship was the 'Beatty,' a merchant vessel, but since she was broken up, Government has lent the society a man-of-war. Verily it is entitled to one. From its establishment in 1756 to the close of the war in 1763, it fitted out more than 5,000 boys for the Navy and merchant service. Between 1769 and 1874 it sent into the Royal Navy, 26,834, Indian Navy 3,760; merchant service, 22,116—making a total of 57,884 boys whom it has sent to sea since its foundation. In addition, between 1756 and 1814, it gave bounties of sea clothing to nearly 40,000 landsmen to induce them to serve in the navy; so

that altogether it has manned the two services to the amount of 97,244 hands.

The 'Warspites' almost invariably turn out well. The training is thorough, and includes, in addition to seamanship instruction, great gun exercise, rifle and cutlass drill, and swimming. Boys who can pass an examination in religious knowledge, reading, writing from dictation, arithmetic, and the elements of geography, may, if they like, pass out of school and receive extra instruction in seamanship, attending evening school three hours weekly.

Beside those already mentioned, there are now the following training-ships for boys in our various ports: the 'Akbar,' reformatory for criminals, and the 'Clarence,' reformatory, in the Mersey; the 'Cornwall,' reformatory, off Purfleet; the 'Cumberland,' industrial school, at Gareloch; the 'Endeavour,' Feltham industrial school and training-brig; the 'Formidable,' industrial school, Bristol; the 'Gibraltar,' industrial school, Belfast; the 'Goliath,' for pauper boys, off Grays; the 'Havannah,' industrial school, Cardiff; the 'Indefatigable,' for sons and orphans of sailors and other poor and destitute boys, Liverpool; the 'Mars,' industrial school,

in the Tay; the 'Southampton,' industrial school, Hull; and the 'Wellesley,' industrial school, in the Tyne. Between them, in the twelve months ending September 1, 1874, they sent into the merchant service as apprentices, 256, and in other capacities, 938 boys, the average annual expense of the lads having been in

	£	s.	d.
Industrial schools	18	19	7¼
Independent ships	21	6	2
Reformatories	20	7	8

The 'Akbar' does not apprentice.

The committee of the 'Cumberland' think, from their experience, that it would be well if the term of apprenticeship for a lad from a training-ship were shortened to three years, since, especially if he is about twenty, he is dissatisfied with his indenture wages in his fourth year, and tempted to desert. Of those apprenticed from the 'Formidable,' about a third, and those the smartest lads, desert, in order to obtain O.S. pay. The managers of the 'Mars,' which has a seagoing tender, and can therefore easily ship its practically trained boys as ordinaries, object to apprenticeship except for short periods on liberal terms. Most of the 'Southampton's' boys

run from their indentures at the end of a year; on the other hand, the superintendent of the 'Havannah' reports that he is not aware of any case of desertion among her boys.[1] The 'Wellesley' has ceased to apprentice. Of sixty-six lads she indentured, only one served out his time; almost all have done well. No boys are apprenticed from the 'Clarence' or the 'Cornwall.' The Feltham boys, apprenticed for four years with 40*l.*, as a rule serve out their indentures. One-third of the 'Goliath's' boys, with from 30*l.* to 45*l.* for four years, desert. The committee of the 'Indefatigable' sensibly remark that, so long as apprenticeship is not compulsory, lads who have been apprenticed are pretty sure to desert, since they are mortified when they fall in with companions with whom they started on equal terms, so far as skill goes, in receipt of far higher pay than themselves. Not more than a fourth of the 'Chichester' boys serve out their time if apprenticed.

Although by no means the most lovely, coaly Tyne is certainly one of the most striking of rivers.

[1] The secretary suggests that if apprentices were not allowed to steer in the early part of their service, they would not be so likely to desert.

The trains rushing screaming over its high-level bridge, the puffing, dingy, trumpet-blasting steamers and other craft that fringe and throng it, the atmosphere of smoke that overbroods its inky waters, the soot-flakes, like black butterflies or baby bats, that flutter in its malodorous air, its cliff-like warehouses, gaunt staiths, rattling shipyards, grim ballast hills, its iron works, lead works, copper works, chemical works, manure works, glass works, brick works, potteries, with their fort-like furnaces, corpulent kilns and Tower of Babel chimney-stalks, all in full swing of high-pressure activity, make up a picture *sui generis*; but what struck me as one of the most curious things I saw on the Tyne was a ship lighted with gas supplied through a pipe from the shore—it is, I think, a unique case.

A hail of '"Wellesley" ahoy!' from the Wapping-like riverside of South Shields will bring a duck-clad boat's crew of boys to pull a visitor on board. She is the smallest of all the English training-ships—the committee hope to be able to fit out the line-of-battle ship 'Boscawen' to take her place—and is said to be out of repair and generally the least adapted for the purpose to which she is put. She

certainly, however, is not the least interesting of the training-ships, and the assistant secretary of the Board of Trade writes thus of the training she gives: 'I put the boys through the rule of the road and the international code of signals, and found them well-grounded and some of them very efficient. The other work in the ship is done in a solid practical way that contrasts favourably with some more showy ships I have visited.'

In 1868—the Admiralty having offered the 'Diana' frigate—a meeting, Mr. James Hall being the prime mover in the matter, was held in Newcastle to form a society for establishing on the Tyne a school-ship for boys, homeless, destitute, or in danger of being led into a life of crime. The scheme was advocated by shipowners on the ground of policy as well as humanity—more sailors and better sailors were wanted, more criminals were not wanted—it would be killing two birds with one stone if the possible criminals could be metamorphosed into actual A.B.'s. At the time when the meeting was held, both banks of the Tyne, according to a local journal, were 'swarming with hundreds of little fellows, poverty-stricken, destitute, homeless.'

The Newcastle society requested the Admiralty not only to lend, but also to fit up the 'Diana.' This request, however, was politely refused in due official phrase. Then, hearing that the Thames reformatory had applied to the Admiralty for a larger ship than their original 'Cornwall,' and that the original 'Wellesley' had been granted, the Newcastle society applied for the discarded vessel on condition of paying the committee of the Thames reformatory for such fittings as they had supplied her with. Government consented to this arrangement, and the two ships exchanged names. The Thames 'Cornwall' is really the old 'Wellesley,' the Tyne 'Wellesley' is really the old 'Cornwall.' The latter was launched as a 74-gun ship, but was afterwards cut down to a 50-gun frigate.

She is very fortunate in her commander, Captain Pocock, R.N. He is not a fussy philanthropist—indeed, he holds all sensationalism in life or literature very cheap—but he is unflagging in his work. He keeps his weather-eye open, but at the same time he trusts as much as possible to the honour of his little men, on the principle that honour, like muscle, is strengthened by exercise. He had soon

bred so much *esprit de corps* amongst those who a short time before had been almost without a tie to anyone, that they unanimously voted that ten pounds given them for a dinner should be devoted to the purchase of black ribbons with the name of the ship on them in gilt letters. All boys when they join are supposed to be 'good;' those who repeatedly commit minor offences are reduced to a second class; those who behave more than averagely well receive good-conduct stripes, with a penny a week for each. When a boy has obtained three of these on his left arm, he can be made a first-class petty officer, with an executive stripe. Plated medals, bars, and crosses, with money, are given as prizes, the money being placed to the boy's credit for outfit on leaving the ship.

Any boy is allowed to make suggestions in public meeting for the better discipline of the ship, which, if approved by the commander, are put to the vote, and—reversing the order of the functions of judge and jury—when Captain Pocock has convicted an offender, he sometimes empanels a number of petty officers to decide upon the culprit's punishment.

The Captain writes thus of his motley crew:—'When they come, although some are of respectable but poor parentage, most of them are miserable-looking objects, some with marks of violence inflicted by parents, many faces branded by a wretched childhood, on which every evil influence has been brought to bear, plainly indicative of gaol and gallows in the future; probably one-half have seen the inside of a school, but their ignorance, as a rule, can only be compared with that of the savage. Their chief faults are lying, wanton mischief, quarrelling with and snarling at each other, and the filthy habits of a comparative few; it is also very sad to see how perfectly ignorant they are of play, and how few friendships there appear to have sprung up between individuals. On the other hand there is a desire and aptitude to learn, both in school and seamanship, an amenity to discipline, a kindliness of feeling, a generosity and absence of greediness, a love of music, a general taking to salt water, and a loyal public opinion springing up among them, which is most encouraging. Their physical improvement is very great, and the painful expression of countenance mentioned above seems

gradually to change. There is also a great desire for cleanliness and smartness of dress. There have been three punishments for indecent language in six months, but neither myself nor officers have heard, or been able to bring home, a case of swearing or profanity.'

The boys gained greatly in self-respect after they had assisted a vessel in distress, and it had been arranged that they were to work the South Shields floating fire-engine. From time to time the ship beats to divisions at night, boats are got ready for lowering, engines rigged, and blankets got out for hypothetical wetting, or provisions are handed up for the fire party told off to man the floating engine supposed to be coming alongside. Five minutes is the allowance for boarding.

The 'Wellesley' being, in spite of her merely material defects, so admirable an institution, it appears very strange that, in the year 1872–3, only two boys should have been sent to her from Newcastle itself, whilst London sent sixty-seven; and in the brief biographies which make up the return of boys discharged, it is melancholy to find every now and then a mother, or some one standing *in loco*

parentis, interfering to lure back a 'Wellesley' boy to vice and crime.

A selection from these little lives of undistinguished personages, still further summarised, will give a fair idea of the success or want of it with which training-ships endeavour to feed the merchant service.

J. C., when apprenticed, was declared by the boatswain, besides being smart and civil, to be as good a seaman as if he had been two years in a coaster. He broke his indentures, became an A.B., and entered the Royal Naval Reserve.

T. D. was induced by his mother to desert from the ship to which he had been bound. Having been found drinking with her by the police, he was imprisoned for three weeks. Since then he has been almost always at sea, and is now an O.S.

J. N. was the only 'Wellesley' boy who ever served out his indentures, having remained the whole time on the coast of China.

Of J. S. his captain writes that he had never shirked his work, even when pulled down by fever, and that he, the captain, was so much pleased with him that he meant to teach him navigation.

J. C. went to sea as engineer's steward, became

A.B., and then returned to the 'Wellesley' to 'grind' for his mate's certificate.

J. G. ran away from the ship to which he had been apprenticed; but worked well as O.S. until his mother and stepfather induced him to leave the sea. The consequence was that he again loafed about in rags, but he has once more gone afloat.

J. B., when last heard of, was A.B. in a vessel bound round the Horn. The master and mate of the vessel in which he was apprenticed were so well pleased with him that they expressed a wish to secure him as a boatswain; 'used to take a regular helm, an excellent hand at the sail-needle, and even with any job aloft.'

J. G. became a deck-hand in the employ of the General Ferry Company at twelve shillings a week, afterwards raised to fifteen shillings. He got into trouble for a time, but since has been earning from 3*l.* to 4*l.* 5*s.* a month as A.B., cook, steward, and fireman. He keeps his mother, not allowing her to do any work.

J. C., having received seven shillings too much when paid off, hunted up his late skipper, and returned the money.

J. J. did well at sea until he reached New York. There he ran away, having been offered twelve dollars a month to drive a cart.

J. N. went to sea at 25*s.* a month, but has since been seen singing in the streets with his father.

J. H. shipped first at 35*s.*, afterwards at 45*s.* a month, but left the sea in Canada, having obtained a good berth in some training stables.

Of G. W., who shipped when sixteen, as O.S., at 25*s.*, his captain says:—'One of the very best lads I ever had; civil, attentive, honest, industrious, nimble as a monkey, and as plucky as could be; he was the very pick of a young sailor.'

Two ships established by shipowners and merchants, chiefly for training officers for the mercantile marine, remain to be spoken of—the 'Conway,' in the Mersey, and the 'Worcester,' in the Thames. These are not in the slightest degree charities, but very good nautical schools. The middle-class parents of the cadets pay, as a rule, in the case of the 'Conway,' 50, and in that of the 'Worcester,' 55 guineas per annum for their sons. To both ships the Queen gives yearly a gold medal to be awarded to the boy likely to make the best sailor, and an

inscribed binocular, with 35*l.* towards outfit, to the successful competitor for a naval cadetship, when offered by the Admiralty. 'My Lords' grant annually five appointments as midshipmen in the Royal Naval Reserve to the 'Conway' cadets, and ten to those of the 'Worcester.' Two years' education on board either ship is allowed by the Board of Trade to count as one year's sea service. Shipowners take certificated 'Worcester' and 'Conway' cadets in preference to other boys as apprentices and midshipmen. The apprentices receive about 10*l.* a year for their three or four years' indentured service; the midshipmen literally the proverbial reefer's pay of 'nothing a day.' They do not have to 'find their own sugar and tea,' but their friends have to give from 50*l.* to 150*l.* premium, which is rather hard in the case of lads so well trained.

The 'Worcester's' curriculum (slightly more extensive than the 'Conway's') embraces the Scriptures, dictation, English grammar, English history, geography, magnetism, meteorology, French, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, navigation, steam, statics, seamanship, gunnery and swimming. Prizes are given to the best swimmer on board and

to the best swimmer who has learnt to swim since he came on board. A very plucky young fellow, of the name of Gordon (the taker also of the first general good conduct prize), who, at the risk of his own life, had saved a fellow-cadet from drowning off Greenhithe, received the bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society, the 'Worcester' medal for saving life, a gold watch from the commander, masters and cadets of the training-ship; and a gold chain and locket from the commander and his wife.

The 'Worcester' lads receive a very thorough professional training. In heaving the lead they become experts. This branch of seamanship is shamefully neglected on board most of our merchantmen. It is said that on board a British ship, on a recent occasion, there were only two hands competent to take soundings, and these were both 'Worcester' cadets. The examination papers are not show papers, printed as advertisements; a fair proportion of the questions must be answered, or the certificate will not be granted. I should not edify the majority of my readers if I were to reprint those on navigation and the theory of navigation. I

must own that I look myself with the reverential awe of ignorance on their—

Obs. alt. Sun's UL.	Obs. alt. Moon's UL.	Obs. dist.
50° 32′ 40″	71° 32′ 50″	39° 28′ 10″
IE − 1. 16.	IE + 1. 15.	IE − 1. 12.

Height of the eye thirteen feet;

their

$$\text{Latitude} = a - p \cos. : h + \tfrac{1}{2} \tan. a \, (p \sin. h)^2. \sin 1'',$$

where

a = observed alt., p = polar dist., h = hour angle, of star

and so on.

But here is one on steam which even an outsider may presume to pronounce common-sensical:—

FURNACE.

1. Describe the best means of managing a furnace of a marine engine, stating also what you know of the process of combustion.

2. What kind of coal favours the production of smoke? State the best means of managing a smoky coal.

BOILER.

3. How do you know when the boiler-water wants changing? Describe the methods in common use.

4. In what part of the boiler is the deposition of 'scale' the most objectionable?

5. Describe the manner in which water is supplied to replace water evaporated—stating in detail the process of 'feed' and changing of boiler-water.

6. What pressure of steam in the boiler will be necessary to blow off the brine through the blow-off cocks, the bottom of the boiler being 17 feet below the water-line of the ship—allowing a column of water 2·305 feet to equal 1 lb.?

7. If the pressure of steam on the piston is 22 lbs. per square inch above the atmosphere, and the barometer on the condenser gauge shows 28 inches of mercury, required the effective pressure per square inch on the piston.

8. What effect would the heating of the condenser have upon the feed-pumps?

9. Suppose the air-pump breaks down, could the engine be worked?

10. Describe the object and process of 'blowing-through.'

11. What is 'super-heating'?

12. What is meant by a compound engine?

13. To what purpose is link-motion applied in the marine engine?

The seamanship papers require the magnetic bearings and distances of 55 headlands, points, &c., in the English Channel, and 'what you know,' with descriptions of the lights, buoys, &c., of 46 islands, headlands, harbours and soundings in the same. They ask twenty-six searching questions on signals, and seventy-seven on the rule of the road.

The defect of these training-ships, whether for officers or men, to a landsman's eye, is that they have not all tenders attached; but on this point the opinions of the experienced differ. The 'Conway' authorities think that a square-rigged tender, although it would be much hampered in the Liverpool river, might at times be advantageous to their pupils, but—they cannot afford one.

The 'Worcester' authorities say that their cadets can only profitably apply the theory they learn on board their school-ship when they leave her.

The 'Akbar' would like to have a properly officered and manned seagoing tender, but hints

that if Government wishes it to have one, Government must find both craft and supplementary crew.

The 'Chichester' asked the Admiralty for H.M.S. 'Bee' as a tender, but was refused. It would like to have a brigantine, as combining square and fore-and-aft rig.

A tender for the Catholic reformatory 'Clarence' is not by its committee considered desirable. The 'Cornwall' reformatory committee are of the same opinion in reference to their ship.

The secretary to the 'Cumberland' goes very fully into the matter.

She has a small tender that has proved useful; but, of course, a square-rigged seagoing vessel, able to carry a hundred boys, would be far better. Still the great additional expense is to be looked at; no local contributions would cover it.

Moreover, 'when a boy attains the age of sixteen years, the Government allowance according to the statute ceases; and when a boy reaches fifteen years of age, and has been four years in the ship, the allowance is reduced one-half. This latter rule, however, is entirely an act of the Home

Office, and is arbitrary and might be rescinded. Now if the tender, as suggested, were to have a constant kept-up crew of selected and senior boys, after completion of the seamanship curriculum on board of the "Cumberland," it is not improbable the greater part of the crew would, at the time of entering the tender, or during their training there, arrive at sixteen years of age, and others might be on the half-allowance class. In these circumstances there would be every likelihood of the greater part of the cost of food and clothing of boys on board of the tender falling to be provided for otherwise than through Government aid.'

The Feltham committee think that a square-rigged tender would render the training of their shore-going sailor boys more complete, but cannot provide one owing to the situation and circumstances of their school. The Feltham lads at present only go afloat in any way, before they go to sea, when they are taught swimming in their school-bath and pulling on the above-bridge Thames.

The 'Formidable' wishes for a tender; indeed, is looking out for one, but wishes also for a Govern-

ment grant towards her purchase and fitting out.

The 'Gibraltar' also wishes for a square-rigged tender, but in this case likewise money difficulties stop the way. Her committee think that Government might lend two or three brigs every summer to go round to the different ports, in which there are training-ships, and take off picked boys from each for real sea training.

The 'Goliath' has a brigantine which she sends beyond the Nore, with a crew of a master, mate, and twenty boys, and would like to have more tenders of the same rig.

The secretary to the 'Havannah' believes that a boy might learn all the seamanship he needs to learn before he is apprenticed on board a sloop tender. On the other hand, the committee of the 'Indefatigable' think a square-rigged tender most desirable.

The 'Mars' has a sea-going tender, in which her lads have sailed round the coast of Scotland, behaving admirably in heavy weather. They can furl sail in a stiff breeze in first-rate style.

The 'Warspite' had a tender some years ago,

but was obliged to give her up because that 'first and model training-ship' lies so high up the river. Surely the practical answer to this is, that the 'Warspite' had better shift her moorings to some spot lower down.

Capt. Pocock would like to have a steam tender for the 'Wellesley,' and certainly a training-ship without a tender of any kind may be called a mere floating school with more justice than is manifested in calling our mail steamers mere floating hotels.

CHAPTER XVI.

FISHERMAN JACK.

AMONGST the old sailors to whose yarns I like to listen, because they describe lives of adventure in so very prosaic, log-book-like a style, are sundry old whalers, time-and-weather-worn old fellows, who must have been born tough as oak or teak, or they would not be alive now to tell their tales. I subjoin a few of their simple stories :—

I.

'No, I was never in the Greenland trade ; sperm, South Seas. We've caught 'em as near home as the Western Islands. Limehouse we sailed from. I went first in the "Mary," Capt. Lock. Afterwards in the "Kent." Three vessels I was in, all English. Shares we're paid by. Oil's been 108*l.* a tun. In

the Timor Straits we made one hundred barrels. The Jews offered me 30*l.* for my share; only got 29*l.* Only made 40*l.* in thirty-eight months. Out two years, and only half full. Went to California and filled up with black oil—elephant oil. Six boats we carried; four we lowered—captain, mate, second mate, third mate. Capsized? Aye! look, I lost my finger from the sharks. Five days from London the boat's bottom was knocked in. We lance the whales to make 'em spit blood as well as water; blood thick as tar. It's all up with them then. Yes, it's a dirty life. When you're down on your knees flinching, you're up to your neck in grease. Sperm oil, though, washes off well with sea-water before it's boiled. Aye! and it's a dangerous life, too. I can swim; if I couldn't I'd sooner have gone in a man-of-war. Sharks! Why, I've told you. They'll eat up the whale in the night when it's alongside. Shares—lays we call 'em—run: captain, 14th; mate 25th; second mate 50th; third mate, cooper, and carpenter 75th; common Jack 150th. It's a poor life. I used to take out some trade, but I've known many men leave the ship in debt. Five pounds advance they'd get, and when

it came time to settle, the captain had to make 'em a present of a pound to pay their way home. Biscuit, pork and beef we got. We could reckon on one year's fresh grub out of three. Buffalo we shot. I was once out seven years.'

II.

'I'm a Lime'us man, too. Forty years I was at sea; pretty nigh all whaling. I tried small fishing at first—dabs, flounders and such—but I didn't like that, so I went to the South Seas after sperm. We got a right whale, though, in Delagoa Bay. It's a hard life. Two hours at the masthead, besides your wheel. By day the mate takes a spy-glass. And it's so uncertain. There was a ship out with us that got two hundred barrels in two months, and we got none.'

III.

'I'm from Cardiff, sir. No doubt it's a big place now, with the new docks. I haven't been there for over forty years. You'd better put it down London, sir. That's where I was apprenticed. I was only

twelve when I left Cardiff. At eighteen I sailed from London in the South Sea whaler "Charles." Plenty then, but there hasn't been a whaler out of the London river for twenty years. I've been capsized three times a day. The sperm is a deal more wickeder fish than the Greenland whale. It will bite a boat in two, but it's tail is worse than its head. Twenty-five years I was whaling—seven voyages. Two years I was in an American ship. We and the Americans were on very good terms. They'd lend their boats to help us when we'd struck a whale, and we'd do the same by them. Different islands we touched at, and shot bullocks, and got pigs and poultry and fruit. Three-and-a-half years was my longest voyage. I've got as much as 80*l.* or 90*l.* as headsman. We always carried a doctor. I suppose he was paid so much a month, and got his lay as well. Idlers we used to think them. I was headsman four voyages. I've taken most of the degrees, and never had a man hurt, except one poor fellow. A shark bit his thigh off at the thickest. If I'd my time to come over again, I'd go whaling. You sign articles as you do aboard other ships, but then you're more

independent, and you can make more money, if you're lucky. There's no reason to complain aboard of a whaler. Two or three gills of rum a day you get. When the whale's alongside we cut a hole over the eye, and rig a tackle and turn it over till we've cut off the head. That goes astern. Then we cut in, standing on stages, with best steel spades with twenty-five feet of pole, just as you'd carve a bit of beef. Pieces two feet long, two feet thick, and six inches wide. When it's all in, we cut it up into bible-leaves, and then try out. It makes its own fuel. There's a cistern and sand to put the fire out if the ship catches. I've seen the decks afire, fore and aft. Yes, I've been wrecked in a whaler, to my sorrow—the barque "Corsair," of London. Curling and Young were the owners. We'd 1,400 barrels in. On a reef in the South Sea Islands; knocked the bottom right out of her. We got off in boats, with the natives after us. They killed the captain and his crew. The other four boats got away—six in a boat; that's the regular crew. We were twenty-eight days at sea. All we got was half a biscuit soaked in salt water, and half a gill of fresh water each a day. We got

to the Ladrone Islands. We were three months on the Isle of Arota, where we were treated very kindly. I could speak Spanish then, though I've pretty near lost it now. The governor himself came to see us. An American ship, short of hands, took us off. Some of us shipped aboard her, and some were sent home by the consul from the Sandwich Islands. Yes, you've to look sharp when you're in tow of a whale cracking on. The water stands up like a wall on both sides—as high as that shelf over there—and if you give it a touch, in on you it tumbles. I've been caught by the line in my time ; taken out of the boat three times in one day. Once the blood was pouring from my eyes and my ears, my nose and my mouth. My leg was cut through to the bone. I'm a cripple, as you see, but that wasn't the reason of it.'

IV.

'I ain't far from here—Surrey, Rotherhithe. I was bound in '15 to a Mr. Burney. Went to Kerguelen's Land, Island of Desolation, sealing for two years. We club the seals, not shoot 'em. One

elephant seal gave us a tun of oil. Then we went to Timor, whaling. I was seven years apprentice. All I got was my clothing and my keep. I came round the Horn in the "Cretan." I was ten years whaling, 'prenticeship counted in. I left it because of a disturbance on board our ship, all owing to the rascality of the captain, an American, Capt. Laban Russell, a big Kentucky man. He shot three men—one fell on my shoulder—one in the groin, another in the right breast, another in the back of the neck. A German that lived in—what is it where the docks are? No, not Gravel Lane; Nightingale Lane, that's it, took up the case. The captain indicted the men for mutiny, and was bound over in ever so much to prosecute; but before the trial came on, the owners packed him off to the Downs, where they'd a ship for him ready to sail. We made 100 tun of oil in six weeks that voyage, off the coast of Japan. It was because we weren't allowed privileges like other crews; were kept just prisoners like, that the row began. The captain came to England again, I've heard, but afterwards he was drowned. We'd no doctor aboard, no witness to set against his word. One

time I was in a boat when a sperm whale bit it right in halves, and yet not a man Jack of us was hurt. Another time, when I was steerer of a boat, before we could stop her way, she touched a whale's bilge, and up it sent us flying, and yet none was hurt. I dare say you have seen it in the picture. There's a man with a lance in his hand. I'd a straw hat on. I got hold of the boat's bottom. Another boat picked us up. I've seen it in a many of the London picture-shops. I made nothing that voyage. Foolish like, for I'd no call to, I must side with the men in a row. Captain and chief mate quarrelled, and the hands knocked off work. For three years I was without a penny in my pocket. I've been wrecked, and was taken off by a Dutch frigate; and for three months aboard the Dutchman we'd no bread, only rice. I'm wounded from head to foot. I've been tapped four times, and broken both ankles, and strained myself with overlifting; and feel this great lump on my ribs. Aye, and thousands I've been robbed of. Some houses by Covent Garden belonged to me and my sister by rights. She was offered a thousand pounds to buy up her right, and foolish

like didn't take it. A fortune I could make if I could write my life.'

V.

'I'm eighty-four. I've been in a French prison. I went to sea in 1803, and in 1813 I went whaling to the South Seas, in the "Thames," Captain Stivers. Melhuish was the owner's name. I never met with an accident, except once I broke a rib—slipped on a ring-bolt; and I've been in two boats that were stove in. In my first whaling voyage, two years, I made 150*l.* Sorry I can't make you out, sir. I'm very hard of hearing.'

VI.

'Yes, *uncommon* good luck I should call 150*l.* in two years at whaling, sir; but you see the old gentleman's memory is failing rather. I'm lamed in my right arm from a fall on board ship. I'm from Whitby. I went to sea in 1817 in the North American trade, and in 1827 I sailed from Hull for Davis's Straits in the "Brunswick," Captain Blyth. I'd 50*s.* a month, and my share a tun. I

made about 4*l.* a month for seven months. I was never capsized, but the boat next to me has been, and two men drowned. I was stroke oar and line-manager. I've had to cut the line once or twice. Greenland sharks are all blind. We used to keep two boys in a boat when we'd a whale alongside, and with blubber-knives they'd kill from twenty to thirty sharks while we were cutting it up. We carried a doctor, but we'd only two accidents. Hull ships ain't stinted. We'd plenty of good salt beef and pork, and flour, and potatoes; no pickles or lime-juice—they weren't used in those days—but we'd no scurvy. Besides the captain, there were two mates, carpenter, cooper, and seven boats with six men, and a harpooner each, and we took sixteen Orkney men as well. You've a spur on each shoe to keep you from slipping when you're cutting up the fish. We don't try out on board in the Greenland trade, but pack the blubber in casks. I've been wet through with the oil. I didn't like the life.'

VII.

'Yes, sir, it's a fact, Greenland sharks are all blind, but they scent the whales. We came upon a dead whale with the under part of its head all scooped out, as if it had been honeycombed by the beggars. Yes, I've been sealing, helped to club 300 at a time. The young ones would sit on the ice and cry like babies—you could see the tears running down their cheeks—when their mothers had scampered off. Both for skin and fat we killed them: salted the skins and put them in casks.'

As at present conducted, our Arctic seal-fishing seems to be very much like a massacre of the innocents. It begins in April, when the seals are on the ice, the females bringing forth or accompanied by their young. As many of the old seals as can be shot are shot, and the 'pups,' or 'cats' are clubbed by thousands. One ship took 22,000 seals in nine days. They are skinned on the ice, and the sealers, maddened with blood and rum, some-

times flay them alive, or barbarously treat the poor confiding little cubs to make them call up their fond mothers to be killed. The skin with the blubber on is dragged over the ice to the ship, where the blubber is made off, and the skins salted and packed. Seal oil is preferred to whale oil, owing to its being nearly devoid of smell and colour. The skin is made into leather, sealskin caps, &c. The seals from whose skin a very few of the high-priced ladies' cloaks are made are not Arctic seals, and are almost exterminated; but women still complacently pay the high prices for mere shams. This wholesale slaughter of the seals has recently attracted very serious attention both in Norway and Great Britain, negotiations which fell through having been going on between the owners of the Norwegian sealing vessels with a view to give the seals another close month. In the spring of last year, thousands of pregnant seals were seen swimming about in the Arctic seas, eating the shrimps which at that time discolour the water there. The sealing vessels arrived, and in three days not an adult seal was to be seen alive; whilst thousands of young seals, helpless and use-

less, were crying for their mothers. It is stated that if this system is persisted in, in a very few years the Arctic seal will be extinct.

Twenty-seven Norwegian vessels are engaged in the seal fishery—twelve steamers; twenty steamers and a few sailing vessels from Great Britain; five steamers from Germany; two from Sweden; and one sailing vessel from Holland. The Board of Trade having been apprised of the wasteful destruction of seals that has been going on for years, communicated with owners of British sealing vessels, and sent down an official to meet them at Dundee. At this meeting the following resolutions were passed:—

1. That in the opinion of those present it is necessary for the preservation of the seal, and the permanent benefit of those engaged in the fishing, that a close time should be established.

2. That the fishing should not commence till April 5, and should not be prolonged beyond May 15, the close time extending between said dates.

3. That the close time should be enforced by a treaty or agreement amongst the Governments

of the countries to which vessels engaged in the fishing belong, and that other Governments should be invited to become parties to such treaty or agreement in the event of vessels belonging to their subjects afterwards engaging in the trade.

4. That under the said treaty or agreement, penalties of considerable amount should be prescribed for infraction of the rules established by it, and that half of such penalties, or such portion of them as may be deemed expedient, be payable to the crews or parties who may give such information as shall lead to conviction against vessels or parties transgressing.

The Norwegian seal hunters, on the other hand, were of opinion that the close time should terminate with March and begin with July.

Nothing accordingly has come of the international negotiations except a Bill brought into Parliament enacting that—

'When it appears to her Majesty in Council that the foreign states whose ships or subjects are engaged in the seal fishery in the area mentioned in the schedule to this Act, or any part of such area, have made or will make with respect to their

own ships and subjects the like provisions to those contained in this Act, it shall be lawful for her Majesty, by Order in Council, to direct that this Act shall, after the date mentioned in the Order, apply to the seal fishery within the said area, or such part thereof as may be specified in the Order.'

The scheduled area is included between the parallels 67° and 75° N. L., and between the meridians 5° E. and 17° W.

The chief provision is that no harp, or saddle-back seal, bladder-nosed or hooded seal, ground or bearded seal, floe rat or any other animal of the seal kind specified by an Order in Council shall be killed before a date similarly specified.

'Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?' we read in Job. The marginal annotation on 'leviathan' is somewhat vague—'a whale or a whirlpool.' If the author of that grand poem meant a whale, it could not have been a right whale, since it is not found in the seas with which he was acquainted; and if he meant a sperm-whale, there could not have been any sperm-whaling in his time. The cachalot certainly 'maketh the deep to boil like a pot, and the seas like a pot of ointment;'

but now-a-days we *can* 'fill his skin with barbed irons and his head with fish-spears,' and 'part him among the merchants'—for one thing, to make pots of ointment with. He still remains a terrible fellow, however, being able to fight with both extremities. The sperm whale can stave in a ship by butting at it, crack a boat like a nut in its jaws, or send her flying up sky-high with one flap of its tail. The bull sperms fight fiercely with one another as well as with man. However, sperm-whales are rich prizes, sperm oil commanding a higher price than train oil, and in addition the cachalot yields spermaceti and ambergris. The Americans have almost monopolised the sperm-whale fishery, the Australian whalers, I believe, chiefly going in for the Cape whale, a first cousin of the Greenland whale. The ship in which I went out to Australia ran foul of one, and almost lost her bowsprit in acknowledgment of the nudge received without thanks.

Besides man, the sword-fish and the thresher attack the Greenland whale, the latter flogging, the former prodding it. The Greenland sharks snap great morsels out of its huge carcase—the whale-louse eats it up almost as ravenously—and the sea-

gulls pecking at the whale-lice drive it still more wild. A thousand years ago Norsemen went to Greenland to catch whales. In 1618 Englishmen and Dutchmen fought for the right of catching them in the Arctic seas, and our countrymen were beaten; but afterwards the Dutch whale-fishery was almost ruined, whilst down to 1830 ours went rapidly ahead. Hull used to send out sixty whalers a year; it now sends out some two or three. Dundee and Peterhead are the present head-quarters of the British whale-fishery. In 1874 eleven whaling steam vessels, two of which were lost in Davis Straits, left Dundee, and five steamers and three sailing vessels were despatched from Peterhead.

The herring fishery carried on by Scotchmen is, however, of far more importance than their whale fishery. The following statistics condensed from the latest report of the Commissioners of the Scottish Fishery Board will be of interest. The herring fishery of 1873 was the greatest on record. In previous years the highest returns had been :—

	Barrels
Cure	833,160
Export	551,605
Branding	422,731½

Brand Fees 7,045*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.*

In 1873 the figures stood

	Barrels
Cure	939,233
Export	668,008
Branding	435,274½

Brand Fees 7,254*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.*

And whilst the supply of Scotch herrings in 1873 was greater than ever before, so was the demand for them for Continental consumption. A larger quantity than usual of small herrings was caught in this year of plenty, either owing to the fishery being carried on farther at sea, or owing to the use of cotton nets, so fine and small-meshed that large fish cannot be caught in them, or if caught they break away.

The following stations were the fortunate ones: Eyemouth, Montrose, Aberdeen, Peterhead, Banff, Buckie, Cromarty, Helmsdale, Lybster, Wick, Stornoway, Loch Carron, Campbelltown, Greenock, and Ballantrae. There was a decrease in the takes at Leith, Anstruther, Fraserburgh, Findhorn, Orkney, and Shetland. The herring is a fish particularly subject to atmospheric influences. Most are caught when the barometer is high and steady, the wind light or moderate, and there is very little

electricity in the air. A good many of the old-fashioned open boats have been replaced by decked boats, at a cost of from 150*l.* to 170*l.* each, but too many still lie at their nets without lights. The herrings are cured both gutted and ungutted, and packed in barrels branded as Crown 'Full' 'Maties,' 'Spent,' and 'Mixed,' and sent to Ireland, Odessa, Petersburg, Riga, Libau, Memel, Königsberg, Dantzic, Stolpemunde, Stettin, Altona, Hamburg, Harburg, Geestemunde, Bremen, Rotterdam, and Ghent.

Wick, with its hundreds of boats and thousands of fishermen and curers, the latter, when takes have been more than usually abundant, turning night-toilers like the former, only by torchlight, has often been described. Herring-fishery, as carried on in the Moray Frith may be a less familiar spectacle.

Although it is August, hail rattles down every now and then, and a wild wind rushes across the parti-coloured Frith, driving before it 'white horses' with flying manes, and rain-squalls that every now and then almost obliterate the bold headlands with broken billows boiling at their feet.

The sands and rocks are black with sea weed, which the tillers of tiny little crofts with ricks like big humming-tops, or still green stunted crops of oats or bere, are pitching into funny little carts. The furze and the heather, the broom and the ragwort, the bluebells and the wild pansies, are shivering in the fierce blast against which even the seabirds find it hard to fight. Balls of creamy foam, as big as guelder-roses, are being wildly whirled about, and the single electric wire hums like an Æolian harp for many a mile. Old folks and children tending tethered sheep and cattle, cower like their charges under the lee of rocks in the snuggest hollows they can find. Boats are drawn up on shore, or rock even in the comparatively sheltered waters of the little inner harbours.

In these boats sit fishermen, silent; a bronzed manly looking set of fellows, old and young, attired in a curiously many-coloured variety of hats and caps, jackets and coats, guernseys, shirts, comforters, boots, oilskins, and tarpaulins. Others peep round the corners of cottages which, like themselves, have turned their backs upon the sea—cottages white, grey, and mottled; buttressed with

peat-stacks, and festooned with fishing nets, split fish, and strung herrings. Even the rushing wind cannot quite disperse the fishy odour that hangs about these curious clusters of cottages, a good many of which seem to have been dropped higgledy-piggledy out of a bag.

As I have said, the fishermen are for the most part silent. Occasionally a little solemn chaff about 'winnin' oot the nicht' is indulged in, and then once more there is silence. Not being able to get out from one port, the Southron starts for another. Two dusty fish-wives rise from the road-side and get into the 'bus. The younger and shorter nurses a fish-scented merry little baby, but she seems to have no heart to listen to its prattle. Suddenly she faints. Her gaunt companion snatches the bairnie from her, almost flings it into the arms of the Southron, and then strokes and croons over the mother as if she were a child. 'Her man's lost at the fushin'' the good soul murmurs in explanation.

Next morning at the new fishing village there is another touching scene. In a corner of a curing shed, littered with baskets, and barrels, and tubs,

outside which can be seen the masts of fishing boats, whilst at one end, as if it had been used as a lecture-room, there is a large slate chalked with a big number, stands a rope-handled coffin, crowned with a bundle of sodden seaman's clothes. Parchment-faced crones, looking very much like corpses themselves in their white mutches, and larking youngsters peep in at the door. A knot of old fishermen inside look down in silence on the coffin, beside which kneels a policeman holding up the sodden clothes in succession for the inspection of a girl of eighteen, who has come to identify the body of her four-months-drowned father.

In this village most of the people are known by tee, or nicknames; there is a feud between East-o'-burn men and West-o'-burn men, and almost all the fishermen are exceedingly superstitious. If they were to find that they had men of certain names on board their boats, they would pitch them overboard, and refuse to put to sea if a stranger on their way to the shore were to ask them where they were going.

It is rather difficult, therefore, to find a skipper who will take a stranger on board his boat; but at

last one consents to do so, forcibly remarking, however, that he must expect to 'hae his boo'ls shakken oot.'

The sea has gone down, but still descends in lean cascades over the weather harbour wall, at the end of which a little lighthouse perks up like a caterpillar's horn. On both curving piers there are clusters of women and children, whose talk resembles the screaming of sea-birds, with here and there a stay-at-home man, looked upon with very scant respect, lounging in their midst. A cry of 'man overboard' is raised, and wilder than ever becomes the uproar. The dripping mooring ropes are hauled in, the long oars creak and strain, as branded boat after boat bounds out of the harbour laden with its pile of reddish-black nets, weighted with stones and buoyed with salt-candied bungs and floats that look like white-lettered black footballs. Hard-a-starboard go the helms, and when fairly on the Frith, sweeps are unshipped, masts are stepped, and the dark lettered canvas hoisted and sheeted home.

The motley crews come aft to yarn and smoke, in some cases passing a single pipe from mouth to

mouth, as children pass a sugar-stick—as up and down go the dark boats on the bright waters. Then sails are half lowered, and the boats are left to steer themselves, the tillers being either unshipped or allowed to thump lazily from side to side. The men sleep or drowsily hum a song. The grey smoke that curls up from each boat shows that water has been put on to boil, and presently the men rouse up and drink their tea, and eat their bread and meat or oatcake, seated on ballast, baskets, and rope-coils. Then they put on their overcoats, and as the dusk deepens, and 'fools' begin to fly and 'whales' to swim about, become more and more impatient in their enquiries of one another and passing crews whether any sign has been seen of the 'heerin,' or of the water 'burning.' Down comes the rain, the breeze grows chillier, and the sea rougher; clouds have blotted out the last streak of faded brightness from the sky. The only light to be seen is that of the distant revolving light coming back out of the darkness to wane into it once more; now and then the flash of a pipe-light in a passing craft, or the ruddy reflection of its fire upon its sail, as backwards and forwards go

the boats, sometimes almost running into one another. 'Wull we dodge or try?' the fishers begin to growl; but a little before midnight up come the fish, 'thick as thick,' and instantly there is wild confusion in the fleet. Down go the masts, over go the nets, reach after reach, making the water flash fire as the floats splash into it. For hours the boats jolt up and down at their nets, and in the grey of the morning, the fishermen begin to haul in. The nets are hung with herrings, and when the sun comes up, he shines upon a glorious show of silver and gold, blue, pink, and green. The boys are scooping in more fish with pole-nets; they lie gleaming about the boats like scattered coin. Then up go sails again, and the men, silver-spangled like harlequins, tug at the sweeps for the race back to port, where 'hoo monie cran hae ye gotten?' is the universal greeting, and the curers are soon all at work once more.

The Yarmouth herring-nets are not so long as the Scottish, but the herring vessels there are much larger, carrying about three times as many men apiece, who take salt with them and can stay at sea for several days. The Yarmouth herrings are

cured differently for different markets, and in addition, the numerically as well as structurally large herring fleet of the quaint old Norfolk town supplies inland towns with great quantities of fresh fish.

Perhaps, however, the most characteristic English fishery is that of the pilchard. 'Fish, tin, and copper!' is the toast of Cornwall. It supplies Genoa, Leghorn, Civita Vecchia, Naples, Adriatic ports, and Malta with cured pilchards, called *fumades*, because they are *not* smoked—*lucus a non lucendo*—in tens of thousands of hogsheads. It is curious to note how the price per hogshead to the curer has varied. In 1815 it was from 100*s.* to 102*s.* In 1871, the minimum price was 20*s.*, although it had been three times as much the year before. Of course the amount of export greatly varies likewise. In 1871, 45,683½ hogsheads of fresh-cured fish, and 1138½ of the previous season's were sent abroad; in 1818 only 1,700, although 24,000 had been sent in 1817. A new mode of putting up the pilchard, like its cousin the sardine, has been introduced at Mevagissey and Newlyn. The boxes are sold at 1*s.* a box, and it must be remembered that the fish

thus turned into a dainty often formerly was only made use of as manure.

The pilchard, like the herring, is a bit of a puzzle to the naturalist. No one can tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth; truants from the great shoal have been caught in the Thames. As the vast 'schools' often come into shallow water, the seine system has been adopted at St. Ives, the bottom there being soft sand free from rocks. The seine boat crew consists of six to row and two to shoot the seine; when not members of a joint-stock co-operative association, they are paid 50*s.* a month, and one-ninth of all fish taken. The 'blowsers,' whose duties will be described presently, get 2*s.* 10*d.* per hogshead on all fish cured by the owners. The seine boat is 33 feet long, and 5 deep. The seine is about 200 fathoms long, and 10 fathoms deep, with warps attached. Two smaller boats, tow-boats, each carrying half a seine without warps, and a crew of four to row and two to shoot the net, are also employed. Good wine may need no bush, but good fish does. Bush-holders, called 'huers,' are stationed on the coast to watch for the arrival of the pilchard shoals.

There comes a shade upon the shallow sea; the water turns red, redder and redder, as if it were turning into wine. A dense shoal is coming in. The huer raises his speaking-trumpet, and gives the signal. The news is carried right and left. 'Heva! heva!' is the joyous shout. ('Fish in shore!') Out go the boats, the huer waving his bough right and left to guide them, and hundreds rushing to the shore to witness the catch. Unheeding to their doom the flashing pilchards haste. When sufficiently near in, the seine is shot. Down go the leads, up bob the bungs. When all are inside the tanned nets—some twenty years ago 75,000,000 pilchards were taken at a haul in St. Ives's Bay—the tow-boats proceed to close the nets, and the Cornishmen afloat and ashore shout as Cornishmen know how to shout when strongly excited; whilst, shortening their warps, the 'blowsers' help to draw in and secure the precious catch. It may remain afloat for days and then take days to secure. To empty the seine a smaller net, called the tuck, is introduced, and when full, hauled up to the surface to a chorus of heartily joyous hurrahs. In vain the flashing fish strive to leap back to liberty. Boats surround

them on every side, and baskets, two men to a basket, scoop them, as if they were shovelling up prize dollars, into captivity, soon to end in salted-alive death. From the boats the fish are hurried to the cellars by everyone who can bear a hand, and packed by women into 'bulk'—salted layers regularly arranged so that the outside fish can easily be counted, to let the oil drain out.

After the fish have been kept in bulk for about a month, the soaked salt is sifted from them, they are taken in baskets to troughs in which they are well washed, and afterwards carefully packed in layers in fifty-two-gallon hogsheads; and when they have been well pressed, the heads are driven into the casks and the fish are ready for exportation. Large numbers of pilchards are caught by Cornish drift-boats, of a burden varying from six to eighteen tons. The larger boats, with crews of seven men, fish off the Irish coast, where, many of the men being Methodists, Wesley's hymns floating across the waters give both pleasure and offence; and it has become the rather poor joke to say that Irish fish can only be caught by English fishermen. Irishmen who have energy and appliances are as

good fishermen as any. Home Rule could not give business energy to those who at present lack it, and would be most unlikely to be able to prevail upon capitalists to furnish appliances that would not pay. Pilchards pass Ireland as well as Cornwall—indeed the Irish might get the first and best pull at them; but there is no regular Irish fishery for them; no attempt is made in Ireland to cure them for exportation; and very few are cured for home consumption. Three-fourths less boys and men, and more than a half fewer boats were employed in the Irish fisheries in 1873 than in 1846. Most of the boats that do fish, during the greater part of the year are engaged in seaweed and manure carrying, &c. Large numbers of the fishermen would starve if they did not farm as well as fish. Mr. Whitworth, of Manchester, offered 2,000*l.* for the development of Irish fisheries, if 8,000*l.* more could be raised for the same purpose; but the appeal was not responded to. According to the latest published official accounts, Irish fisheries were improving in seven divisions, and the opposite in rather more than three times as many. It ought to be stated that, contrary to a vulgar

prejudice about Irish bellicosity and lawlessness, Irish fishermen are, as a rule, more peaceable and amenable to law than their fellow-craftsmen of other countries. When the fishermen's riot took place at Kinsale, there were there 181 Manx mackerel boats, 42 English, 98 Irish, 2 Scotch, and 70 French; and the coastguard spoke highly of the behaviour of the Irish fishermen. It is estimated that the fishermen, as a whole, lost 20,000*l.* through their eight days' idleness. As it was, however, to say nothing of the French fishermen, the British and Irish took 120,000 boxes of six score each, as against 60,000 boxes in the year before. The price varied from 60*s.* the six score to — at a time when ice ran short, and large numbers had to be thrown overboard—*6d.*

In the Irish herring as well as the mackerel fishery, outsiders reap the richest of the harvest. In the year just referred to there were 155 Irish herring boats off Howth, against 182 Cornish, 107 Manx, and 54 Scotch.

I once visited the Galway Claddagh, the fishermen's quarter, upon a rainy December day. The grey bay, set in sodden sand, dank seaweed, and

dark boulders, looked inexpressibly desolate. Dripping grass and weeds and moss grew rankly on sodden thatch; but many of the huddle of little hovels had no thatch to be sodden. Smoke-blackened hearths gaped in jagged rafterless gables, staring at one another in stony silence. The doorways and window holes looked like eye-sockets from which the eyes had been wrenched. One or two had been half blocked with stones, on and under which drooped a few melancholy fowls. Other stones kept the loose shutters of huts which had been deserted with the roofs still on, from banging to and fro. Here and there lay a rotting mast or oar, or literally tinkered boat bottom upwards. A little old furniture, which looked as if it could not well be made more rotten, was soaking in the rain. Stumpy yellow candles seemed to be the chief inside stock of the 'shop;' outside dangled a sod and a wisp of straw. A few women were washing clothes in the sea, a few others were starting with their baskets for the melancholy town, to wander in and out of the shops with their minor-keyed 'Want any herrin'?' A knot of men, looking as disconsolate as the draggletailed fowls or

steaming bullocks, looked out upon the sea. 'It's no manner of use our fishing,' said one to me. 'The trawlers catch all the fish in the bay, and kill the rest, except what they drive away.'

CHAPTER XVII.

JACK'S BILL OF WRONGS.

Qui fit, Mæcenas, ut nemo, etc.

THE quotation is somewhat musty, but part of it will come in very pat to our subject—

> Contra mercator, navem jactantibus Austris,
> Militia est potior.

Indeed the merchant seaman of modern days declares that any life is better than a sailor's. The contented Jack who, when 'the stormy winds do blow,' pities 'the poor people ashore, with the chimney-pots falling about their heads,' has become a myth, if indeed, he was not always one. 'Those that come to sea for plasur' 'd go to —— for divarshun,' is a coarse proverb which more correctly conveys the sailor's estimate of maritime life.

No doubt it is a hard—a very hard—life, but it

may be well to ascertain the exact grievances of which Jack complains as being remediable, if the wish to remedy them existed amongst those who have the power.

Let us hear his complaints from his own mouth. At a meeting of merchant seamen, held at Seaham, at which our old friend Peter Oakman, of Chapter I. was one of the speakers, resolutions were passed to the effect:—1. That if the crew of a vessel, or any part of the crew, consider her not fit to go to sea from any defect or deficiency in hull, spars, rigging, boats or provisions, they (if not informed of her unseaworthiness before they signed articles) should have power to call in a Government surveyor to inspect her, and to report on her condition in a court of law, as a sworn witness. 2. That every seaman engaged in the home and coasting trades ought to receive, with a sufficiency of water and fresh vegetables, the following daily rations—1½ lb. of beef or 1¼ lb. of pork, with a third of a pint of peas, 1½ lb. of bread, ½ lb. of flour or 1 lb. of potatoes, 1½ oz. suet, molasses for puddings, 1 oz. of coffee, ½ oz. of tea, 2 ozs. of sugar, and 2 ozs. of butter; and that no vessel employed in those trades

should be allowed to put to sea with less than twenty-eight days' provisions on board, since such vessels run great risk of being blown off the land, and compelled to run for shelter into foreign ports where little or no food can be got. 3. That the present wet forecastles should be abolished, and the crew lodged either in what is now called the cable-stage, or else in a half-deck abaft the main-mast, cordage, stores, &c. being in neither case allowed to cumber the men's sleeping quarters. 4. That vessels from 50, advancing by fifties, to 250 tons register, should carry two apprentices to one, two, three, four, able seamen respectively, besides the mate and master; and for every additional 50 tons, three apprentices and one A.B. 5. That ordinary seamen are employed to a dangerous extent, since they do no good, but downright harm at times when real seamanship is required; and, moreover, apprentices finding that they can do more than ordinary seamen's work, are induced to desert, in the hope of obtaining ordinary seamen's wages. And 6. That though married seamen's homes were not required at Seaham, they would

be a great boon in large ports frequented by foreign-going ships.

The seamen of North and South Shields complain bitterly of the employment of foreigners in the British merchant service, on the grounds that it not only deprives British seamen of employment and drives them to ship under foreign flags, but also that it deteriorates those who still sail under the red ensign, and discourages British lads who otherwise would take to the sea like ducklings to the pond. They also complain that in case of the wreck of a mortgaged vessel, the mortgagees claim the insurance, leaving the crew to whistle for any wages they are not able to get out of the insolvent owner.

The Sunderland seamen likewise complain of the employment of foreigners and British subjects who have not been apprenticed in British bottoms, but have obtained discharges as A.B.'s. They indulge in growls, both loud and deep, at the dark, damp, sloppy, badly-ventilated, store-cumbered, caverns in which they have to pig at sea. They say that the Board of Trade regulations are not properly carried out by the inspectors of small and

other stores supplied to foreign-going ships—that frequently the water is scanty, bad, and improperly kept; that the stinted rations of tea and coffee are horribly bad; and that the supply of anti-scorbutics is utterly inadequate. They maintain that many ships leave port making water fast, and with rotten and worn-out gear, and boats cumbered with live stock, and devoid of necessary appliances. They complain of some owners and masters as being overbearing, whilst they say it is often impossible for them to obtain redress for grievances aboard, and very difficult ashore. They complain further of the time they have to wait for their wages when they come off a foreign voyage; of the trouble some of their wives experience in getting their monthly half-pay, and of 'the petty advantages taken of them—for instance in the exchange of small advance notes, increased fine put on their tobacco supplied to them out of bond.' Finally, as straightforward men, who do not like to be badgered by lawyers and clerks, they object to the adjudication of ordinary magistrates upon their complaints, and would have some kind of special

nautical arbitrator appointed for their benefit in every large port.

The London Seamen's Mutual Protection Society objects to the employment of foreigners in British ships, on the plea that they are often the outcasts of their countries, and introduce contagious diseases on board. The society has, therefore, petitioned Parliament to enforce a medical examination of the crew before any ship flying the British flag be permitted to sail.

The same complainants urge further that ships' articles are drawn up in an arbitrary manner, so as to bind sailors to duties which they ought not equitably to be called on to perform; that owners ought to be compelled to give allotment notes; that it is not fair that a sailor should be punished criminally for non-fulfilment of agreement whilst he has only the chance of a civil remedy against a defaulting owner; that laws in reference to sailors' food are often either evaded or defied by owners or masters; that wages ought to be paid within forty-eight hours after the termination of the voyage; that seamen should be required to pass an examination for an A.B. certificate, and that

owners should be compelled to employ none but certificated men and apprentices; that far too many foreigners are employed in the British merchant service; that abuses have crept into the shipping offices of the United Kingdom; that shipmasters unfairly charge interest on money advanced out of the men's earnings; and, finally, that the berthing accommodation in British ships is disgracefully bad.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OWNERS' ANSWERS.

BRITISH shipowners—ships being generally owned in shares—are an exceedingly numerous, and of course miscellaneous body of men. Some no doubt look upon sailors simply as 'hands,' to be hired, fed, and housed as cheaply as possible. If a sailor's friend talks philo-Johannism to them, they cynically answer, 'It is all the better that sailors are such consummate fools—if they were not, how could we man our ships?' Others of a superior grade answer, 'You cannot reasonably expect us to trouble ourselves much about the well-being of men who so recklessly disregard, indeed often maliciously act counter to, our interests.' But there are others again who say, 'We *do* care for our men —what are the wonderful grievances, after all, that sailors have to complain of?'

It cannot be denied, they maintain, that although in the service of yacht-clubs, mail companies, and large houses, and amongst our fishing population, there are still good mariners, the bulk of our sailors are inferior to what the bulk used to be in health and strength, in seamanship and in morals. To say nothing of their inefficiency, they get drunk, they desert, they cheat, they are mutinous. And yet what is the remuneration that A.B.'s —so-called A.B.'s—receive? From 30*s.* a week, without rations, up to 90*s.* a month, with; steamers paying higher wages than sailing-vessels, and O.S. getting about 1*l.* a month less, and firemen generally from 10*s.* to 1*l.* a month more than A.B.'s. The cost of victualling a ship is from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 9*d.* a mouth, per diem. In the collier trade, a man sometimes gets as much as 2 lbs. of meat a day; in no respectable ship is the minimum ration less than 1¼ lb. of pork, or 1½ of beef, unless butter be served, when 1 lb. of meat is the allowance. Contrast such pay and findings with the wages of a Dorsetshire or Wiltshire labourer, and his consequent 'tea-kettle broth,' with a rare bit of 'pig-meat,' for a treat—indeed with people a

good deal better off than farmers' men. And if complaint be made of the quality rather than the quantity of the provisions, though some dealers may supply inferior goods to pinched and pinching owners, sailors may demand a survey. It is true that men who 'find themselves'—the 'bread and herringers,' as they are called—are sometimes half-starved, and might be wholly starved if owners did not supply them with extra food. But whose fault is that? The men's own, because they will not bring provisions enough with them, but trust to be able to 'sponge,' on board either their own ship or any other that may be unlucky enough to be moored alongside theirs. It is said that this system of 'cadging,' has become so prevalent that masters of ships in which the crews are 'found,' instruct their pilots to give 'half-starvationist' vessels a wide berth in harbour. 'The men will be coming on board to dinner too often,' they say with a sneer.

Between 1848 and 1873, merchant sailors' wages were raised to the extent of 30*s.* a month, and, say the owners, if they have not as a rule as varied a diet as a man-of-war's men, in a good many

instances they get considerably larger amounts of the things they do receive; for instance, 1½ lb. of beef, and 1¼ lb. of sugar against the 1 lb. and ¼ lb. respectively allowed in the Navy. The provisions a sailor is to receive are specified in the articles he signs, and if he does not get them of the quantity and quality agreed on, he can demand compensation. Again, as to sleeping accommodation, a man who adopts a sailor's life cannot surely expect to lie on roses. Forecastles are no worse than they used to be; a good many are much better than they used to be, and many landsmen are housed quite as badly as the most unlucky sailor.

In reference to responsibility, Mr. Norwood points out that every British ship has a registered responsible owner, and maintains that Lord Campbell's Act, empowering the near relatives of any man who has lost his life through the direct negligence of his employer, if they can show that they had a beneficial interest in his life, to sue for damages occasioned by his death, applies as much to a sailor as to a bricklayer.

Another charge brought against them which owners resent, is that of all proprietors they have

the least real knowledge of their property and subordinate employés—that it is by no means an uncommon case to find owners who have never even seen their ships, and who know no more of the men who serve on board those ships, than if they lived in Timbuctoo. Mr. Norwood answers that if a shipowner does not see his ship from time to time, he will not be a shipowner long, and that if he does not know all his sailors—frequently engaged for a single voyage—personally, he engages competent people to look after them. Mr. Donald Currie points to the fact that a good many shipowners have only a few sixty-fourths in the vessels they partially own, and asks whether it is reasonable to suppose that they should, under such circumstances, be expected to take an affectionate interest in the men who constitute the crew of the craft?

Again, shipowners deny that the way in which ships' articles are drawn is arbitrary. On the other hand, they say they are carefully-drawn documents which must be signed in the presence of a shipping master, after having been read out clearly to all the crew. A copy is sent to the Registrar-General's office, and shipping masters are required to furnish

the men with an abstract of the most important clauses. In reply to the charge that articles bind sailors to membership in benefit societies, owners affirm that this is only done to the extent of 7½*d.* a month in Jersey ships. They assert also that it is their *custom* to allot half-pay to sailors' families except in trades in which desertion is notoriously common; that a seaman has a full legal remedy against an owner for deficiency of food or pay; and that sailors get their wages as a rule far sooner than they make out. As to A.B. certificates, the owners contend that sailors would be almost sure to lose them, and that an employer has a right to engage ordinary seamen if he thinks they can do his work. The owners laugh at the *laudatores temporis acti* who would take Noah's Ark as a ship-building model, assert that the disproportion between length and beam in modern ships has been sensationally exaggerated, that the 'cracked up' ships of old were not nearly so good as they are represented to have been; and that if English shipowners are saddled with many more restrictions, from which foreigners are exempt, England will soon lose her carrying trade.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW THEY MANAGE IN UTOPIA.

THE capital of Utopia, everyone knows, is Kennaquhair—a city famous as being not only the largest and richest, but also the cleanest in the whole world. It consumes its own smoke, its drinking-water is clear and sparkling as crystal, and free from all hidden impurities; and even its river and its docks are as limpid as the unavoidable defilements, which are the consequence of an enormous commerce with all parts of the world, will permit.

The climate of Utopia is capricious, but now that its inhabitants have ceased to add to its inconveniences by squandering thousands of pounds' worth of fuel, manure, and manufacturing materials, the weather in Kennaquhair is often exceedingly agreeable.[1]

[1] This was written before the world had been favoured with Dr. Richardson's picture of an ideal city.

It was a glorious summer afternoon. Sunlight trembled in golden plates and spangles on the emerald-green waters of the Kennaquhair docks. The good ship 'Outis' lay at the jetty, loaded for her start upon the morrow. Her crew, as is the custom in Utopia in the present day, had loaded her, taking holiday in turns. It was not yet time for general knocking off of work in the docks, but the 'Outis' was ready for sea, and so her crew were dismissed to take their pleasure until they should be needed to warp her out to go down the river with the morning's tide.

'Well, old girl,' said Jack Mainstay, turning round as soon as he had got ashore, to apostrophise his ship, 'I've been a voyage or two in ye, and the more I know ye, the better I like ye—same as I say of my old woman. What a change there is since they gave us the dock-work. Here have I been earning money instead of wasting it, ever since I came ashore, and yet I've had every bit as much larking as was good for me.'

In a very self-complacent frame of mind, Jack rolled out of the dock-gates, and made his way to the Married Seamen's Lodging-Houses. The block

was not so pretentious a pile as some of our model lodging-houses, but quite as comfortable, and less prison-like. There were clean blinds inside, and fresh flowers outside the windows.

'Have a pipe and a game of bagatelle, or a shy at the pins to-night, Jack, before the concert?' asked a hearty, healthy old salt, standing on the steps of the handsome Seamen's Institute.

'Nay,' answered Jack, 'it's my last night ashore; but what a jolly place this is! Better than the Highway, eh, Sam? Things have changed since you and I first went to sea, old boy. It was a dog's life then, but now it's a trade for a man.'

Mounting to his trim three rooms, Jack found his wife getting an early tea ready—tea, bread and butter, shrimps, watercresses, and something more substantial for the bread-winner who had not come home to dinner in order that he might be able to get away from the docks the earlier in the afternoon.

'Why, Sal, I thought it was your turn in the wash-house to-day,' cried Jack.

'So it was, Jack,' answered Sal, 'only Jemima Suds changed turns with me that I might have as much of you as I could your last day ashore. But

the youngsters are going to have a dip in the baths as soon as they come out of school, so as they may be as spruce as Sunday for daddy. They'll be out directly—the school-clock's at a quarter to. What a convenience it is, Jack, to have good schools, and baths, and everything so handy.'

'Where's Jack?' asked Jack major.

'Down in the playground with Tom,' answered the mother. 'Tom came up just in time for dinner to see the last of you.'

Jack looked down into the playground, part of which was a piazza roofed with glass, and saw Jack minor, who was going to sea on the morrow, for the first time, as apprentice in the 'Outis,' and little Tom who had come up from the training-ship 'Neptune,'—a training-ship supplied with a sea-going steam, and a ditto simply sailing tender —engaged in amicable rivalry at the game of giant's stride.

The family assembled for tea, of which sumptuous banquet all the children got their full 'whack,' but Jack, who was going to sea, and little Tom, who was going to go to sea, were the juvenile heroes of the occasion.

'Cheer up, mother,' said the father in the course of the evening. 'You can draw my half-pay, and I've insured my life and Jack's, and our chests; and when I got that little lump of money, I bought a pension. It isn't much, but if I live to leave the sea, it will be something to help keep us going, and if I die before, they'll give you and the little ones something out of the widows' and orphans' benefit fund, but I don't want you to be a widow, or the youngsters to be orphans, for a good while yet, old girl.'

'Oh, be a good boy, Jack,' said weeping Sal to her son.

'I'll try, mother,' answered Jack, half disposed to blubber, but striving hard to keep a firm upper lip before his almost enviously admiring brother little Tom.

Next morning Jack and his son went down to the docks fresh as daisies. 'Ah, lad,' said Jack to the youngster, who was admiring the beautiful gilt figure-head of the 'Outis,' 'but there's something better than that about her. Things were very different when I first went to sea. Look at our ship now. She hasn't been insured so that it would be

a profit to send her to the bottom ; and we know that she isn't overloaded, for didn't we load her ? And she's got good boats and enough of them, and the gear all ready—it wouldn't take a month to launch them, as it used in the old time. And then there are life-buoys, and life-belts ; and the masters and the mates—let alone their being as good seamen as ever stowed a sail—are as good navigators as any navy officer. It's no joke the examination they have to pass nowadays.'

'Why, boy,' Jack went on, 'look here, every man Jack aboard 's a Utopian. I've been in ships where more than half my mates were foreigners. In one ship—a Kennaquhair ship—I was the only Utopian aboard. Decent fellows a good many of the foreigners were, but Utopian craft ought to have Utopian crews, and it's easy enough to get them now that ships must carry apprentices according to their tonnage again, and the apprentices stick to the sea instead of cutting it as they used for any work they could get ashore.'

'Here are our berths, my boy,' the father added as they entered the forecastle. 'Mother needn't be afraid you'll be drowned or stifled. It's light

and clean, and sweet, and as tight as a drum. Some fo'c's'les used to let in the water as if they were colanders; but here, you see, there are no bare chain cables running through, and no cargo stinking from the hold, or choking up the place. Look here—it's all down in black and white in this bill what you've got to expect. Here's the rations, good and plenty—salt beef, flour, suet, raisins, salt pork, split peas, preserved meat, compressed vegetables, biscuits, fresh bread, rice, porter, preserved potatoes, sugar, treacle, tea, coffee, vinegar, mustard, pickles, pepper, and salt; and here's the medical comforts: brandy, rum (though take my word for it, coffee's better than grog any day, except you take it downright as physic—you can do more work on coffee—it comforts you more and keeps up your heart better, when you've been pretty nigh all night at the pumps, say), port wine, white wine, prepared soup, essence of beef, sago, arrowroot, preserved milk, limejuice, refined sugar, soap, pearl barley, carbolic acid—that don't smell nice, but it's a real medical comfort for all that. Ah, lad, things were different when I was a youngster.'

There was a library of good—not goody—books on board the 'Outis,' the captain worked his men as little as he could on Sundays, and never 'bullyragged' them; his subordinates followed his example—'knuckledusters' had ceased to be a necessary article in the kit of a Utopian vessel's mate. The voyage out was a very pleasant one—plenty of hard work to be done, of course, but a sufficiency of well-treated A.B.'s and ordinaries as good as many (rated) A.B.'s of former days, to do it thoroughly and cheerfully.

In the Utopian colonial port at which the 'Outis' unloaded and reloaded, there was a Sailors' Home and Institute built on ground granted by the Colonial Government. The 'Outises,' or perhaps I ought to write 'Outines,' availed themselves of its advantages, and after a pleasant return voyage found themselves once more in the Kennaquhair river.

A pay-clerk boarded the vessel and paid the crew a portion of their wages, undertaking to send the rest after them if they wished to go to a distance.

Some did so wish, but a good many returned

to their quarters in the Kennaquhair Single and Married Sailors' Homes, and of these most availed themselves of the chance of doing dock-work.

A few crimps were still left even in Kennaquhair, and, in accordance with old custom, they attempted to board the 'Outis.' In accordance, however, with a clause in a recent Act of the Utopian Legislature for their case made and provided, they were ducked one after another with a whip rove on the cro' jack yard.

'Well, mother,' said the father as the two Jacks entered their little home, laden with little foreign presents for their friends, 'I've brought home your boy as good a boy as he was when he went out, and a deal better sailor—and neither the one nor the other could be said of many a boy after his first voyage, in the old time. If Jack goes on at this rate, I suppose he'll be thinking of keeping company with some one in a year or two. And a good thing, too. Nothing like a good young woman, and a fair chance of getting spliced to her, to keep a young seafaring chap out of mischief.'

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